



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

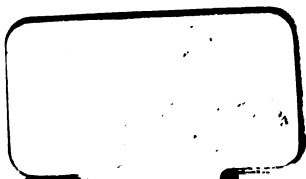
About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600055482U



T

U

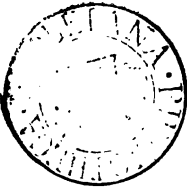
W

A

NOVEL WITH TWO HEROES.

BY ELLIOTT GRAEME,

AUTHOR OF "BERTHOVEN: A MEMOIR."



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"Why did she love him? Curious fool! be still;
Is human Love the growth of human Will?"—BYRON.

LONDON:
CHARLES GRIFFIN AND COMPANY,
10, STATIONERS' HALL COURT.

1872.

[*All rights reserved.*]

249. y. 347.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. AND W. RIDGE,
BARTHOLOMEW CLOSE.

CONTENTS.



Book the First.

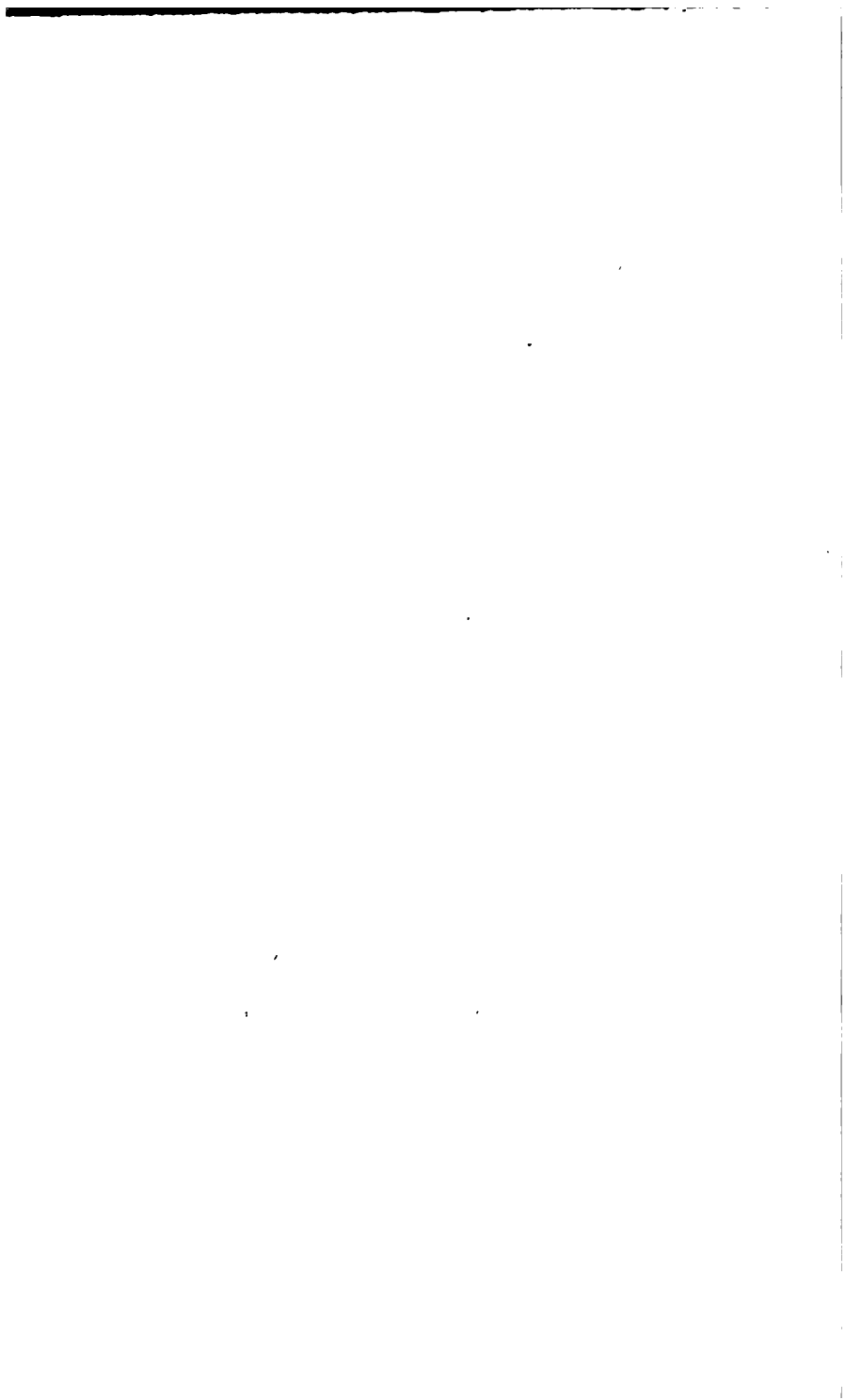
CHAP.	PAGE
I. AN ADVENTURE	1
II. "NATUR, MEIN HERR! NATUR! NATUR!"	9
III. STADTLEIN	24
IV. "OF NOBLE RACE WAS SHENKIN!"	44
V. THE DIRECTOR AND HIS HOUSEHOLD	63
VI. AN UNEXPECTED RENCONTRE	94
VII. ROBERT	114
VIII. "ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL"	143

Book the Second.

IX. ILMINGTON RECTORY	161
X. DE PROFUNDIS	183
XI. "ONLY HIS OWN ENEMY"	205
XII. SUNDAY AT THE RECTORY: FORENOON	230
XIII. SUNDAY AT THE RECTORY: AFTERNOON	245

Book the Third.

XIV. THE YOUNG PROFESSOR	263
XV. ROBERT AND HIS ANCESTORS	286
XVI. THE FAMOUS RETREAT OF THE FOUR HUNDRED	328
XVII. MALA ASTONISHES HER FATHER	352



Book the First.

A NOVEL WITH TWO HEROES.



CHAPTER I.

AN ADVENTURE.

ON a bright morning in the early part of May, a young man was walking rapidly along the high road leading from the village of Kirchenstein to the little town of X——, in Würtemberg. Although in the usual travelling costume, with knapsack and stick, he was evidently no stranger to the place, for he seemed to know his way, looked neither to the right hand nor to the left, but continued his route with an air of thoughtful abstraction.

Suddenly he was roused by a confused noise behind—suppressed screams, and the clatter of hoofs borne onwards by the wind. He turned hastily, and at the same moment two horses rushed madly past, dragging after them a carriage. In another instant those within would inevitably have been dashed into the river, which flowed impetuously a few yards off swollen by the spring rains. Quick as thought, the pedestrian vaulted into the neighbouring field, and

thus escaping a long angle formed by the winding of the road, arrived first on the spot, and boldly seizing the reins as the foaming animals came up, effectually checked their headlong progress.

When by alternate firm restraint and gentle caresses he had succeeded in soothing them, he turned to the occupants of the vehicle, who seemed too much overcome by terror to be able to render him any assistance. They were three in number—a tall, elderly gentleman in the dress of a clergyman of the Anglican Church, a young lady evidently his daughter, and a youth who lay back on the cushions apparently lifeless, his emaciated countenance and wasted frame denoting only too plainly the action of some lingering disease.

“My boy! my boy! he is gone!” cried the clergyman. He was an Englishman.

“No, no, dear father!” said the young lady, who alone retained any degree of composure, “he has only fainted. It is fortunate that we can procure water;” and, dismounting lightly from the carriage, she filled a little silver cup at the river, and proceeded gently to bathe the temples of the sufferer. In a few moments this had the desired effect; the young man opened his eyes, and made an effort to sit upright.

“Do not move, dear Walter,” whispered the girl, “we are quite safe. Thanks to you, sir!” she continued in German, turning to the stranger. “My

father does not understand your language, or he would join me in offering you our most grateful thanks."

The young man murmured some confused answer in English, to the effect that he was glad to have been of service to them.

"Papa!" cried the young lady, joyfully, "the gentleman understands English!" an exclamation which roused the attention of the father, who had been anxiously watching his son, regardless of all else. Relieved from immediate fear, he looked for the first time at the stranger, mechanically put his hand into his pocket, as a preliminary to what was evidently his customary method of discharging obligations, and withdrew it again, quickly, with the sudden conviction that on this occasion the debt would have to be paid in a different way.

"Sir," he began, with a certain pomposity, not unmingled with a degree of feeling, "I am at a loss how to express my sense of the gallant manner in which you have acted. We owe our lives to you. But it is only what one expects from an Englishman. I—I am proud to claim you as a countryman."

"I am sorry to be obliged to *disclaim* that honour, sir," returned the stranger, with a touch of *hauteur*, "I am a German."

"Indeed! you speak our language very well."

"My mother is of English descent."

"Ay, ay, I thought I could not be mistaken," said the clergyman, surveying him with the critical glance of one who considers his point proved; "there was *British* pluck in the way you seized those horses."

The young man turned silently away, with an almost imperceptible shrug of the shoulders, and met the gaze of the invalid, who smiled faintly, and tried several times to speak, but in vain—exhaustion prevented him, and he lay as though transformed into marble. The young lady observed the pitying glance.

"Yes," she said, while her eyes filled with tears, "my poor brother is very weak; excitement such as this is terrible for him."

They presented a mournful contrast, those two young men—both about the same age; the one full of life and energy, with athletic, well-developed figure, and healthy, sun-burnt face; the other worn to a shadow, deathly pale, a faint twitching of the mouth the only sign of animation. The father glanced at both, and sighed heavily. The stranger seemed to feel that his presence must be painful to them, and drawing out his watch, said, "Can I be of any further assistance to you? I am rather pressed for time, having to meet the nine o'clock coach at X——."

"We are going there also," said the Englishman, eagerly. "Won't you take a seat in the barouche?"

Perhaps you would have no objection to drive for me a little way? Unluckily, I have not much use of my left arm. My coachman cannot be very far behind."

The young man hesitated; but a beseeching glance from the lady settled the question, and he assumed the reins. As they drove slowly back to the high road, he heard the history of the accident. The party were abroad for the health of the invalid; they had just been to visit a young relative studying at the University of Städtlein, and were now on their way to the baths at L——. They had started early, in order to avoid the heat of the day, and for a time all had gone on smoothly, when of a sudden the horses had taken fright at something by the wayside: "The idiot of a fellow whom I engaged to act as guide over these cross-country roads had the reins at the moment. Instead of holding the animals in, he immediately began to shout and yell at them in the most unearthly manner. I don't know if that is the proper way of managing your German horses, but it certainly won't do for our thorough-breds. The poor brutes, more terrified than ever, flew on like lightning; the driver was jerked from his seat—my John likewise, and we gave ourselves up for lost."

As the clergyman finished, the redoubtable John was descried in the distance coming towards them, his livery somewhat the worse for his descent in a

ditch, but otherwise unharmed by the aerial journey. In his wake followed the bumpkin who had been the cause of the disaster, his face disfigured by several deep scratches, his peaked felt hat crushed into a shapeless mass, his blouse torn to ribands. His dolorous appearance somewhat disarmed the wrath of his incensed employer, who contented himself with darting ireful glances upon him from over his starched white neckcloth, and launching at him several pretty strong epithets, which, being enunciated in good Saxon-English, did not affect the delinquent particularly. He took his seat stolidly by the side of John, who, after numerous reciprocal congratulations, resumed his office with an expression of contempt for his companion, which elevated his nose to even a higher angle than is usually discernible on the physiognomy of the Plush family abroad.

"And this yere's a speciment o' furrin' drivin, sir!" he observed in a melancholy tone to the supposed compatriot, as he pointed with his thumb over his shoulder.

The stranger, perceiving that his accepting a seat inside would incommode the sick youth, steadily refused the pressing invitation of the father, and turned to bid adieu.

"Nay, nay! we must not part thus!" said the Englishman; "are we not to know the name of our preserver?"

"By all means, if you wish it!—Arnold Müller."

"And your address?" added the clergyman, after formally taking down the name in a prodigious pocket-book.

The young man replied with a smile that he did not know it himself; that he was going for the first time to Städtlein.

"In that case," said the Englishman, "here is mine—Ilington Rectory, Coastshire, England; and that of my nephew, Sir Robert Chesney, in Städtlein. I hope to be able to requite in some little measure the service you have rendered us, should you ever cross the Channel; and in the meantime, Robert may be of use to you. He has already been nearly two years in the place, and consequently feels more at home than you will do for a time. I presume you are proceeding to study at the university?"

"Yes, I go to Städtlein to study, but not at the university. I am an artist—a musician."

The clergyman's manner—stiff before—suddenly acquired an access of formality, but the German failed to notice it. Turning to the young lady, he said, "Adieu, mademoiselle! I wish you a pleasant journey."

"Keep this for my sake—for his sake!" she said, pointing to the invalid; and hastily drawing a ring from her finger, she leant forward and placed it in his hand. He had no time to return the gift, even had he felt so disposed; for at the moment the horses,

which during the short conversation had been impatiently pawing the ground, started off at a round pace, and he found himself once more standing alone on the dusty highway, gazing at a little white hand that waved a last adieu to him.

CHAPTER II.

"NATUR, MEIN HERR, NATUR! NATUR!"

ARNOLD MÜLLER had the fortune (or the misfortune) to be the son of an enthusiast, who had devoted himself to scientific pursuits early in life, to the great annoyance of the old gentleman, Arnold's grandfather. The latter, a wealthy merchant in Berlin, after many unavailing attempts to induce his refractory son to give the eminent house of Müller and Co. the benefit of his services, evinced his lasting displeasure by drawing up a new will, in which the bulk of his property was left to his eldest son, Andreas (who had long been a partner in the firm), and a mere pittance to the rebel Jacob.

"If he is so enamoured of his goddess, Science, let him live by her! the labourer is worthy of his hire," the old man remarked with grim satisfaction; and after accomplishing this act of retribution, he gathered up his feet into the bed and died.

Greatly to the astonishment of Andreas, Jacob appeared perfectly content with his portion (which, in truth, far surpassed his expectations, so bitter had been the father's invectives against him and his

scientific "hobby"); for, although the elder brother knew well that the will would hold good in any law court, he could not forget his own instrumentality in bringing it about—the vague hints and darker innuendoes which had been employed to the prejudice of the absent one. He was, therefore, immensely relieved by Jacob's unsuspecting trustfulness, and proposed, with a cordiality genuine for once, to invest the little sum for him in the most profitable way. This offer was gratefully accepted by Jacob, who, little imagining the motive that prompted this unwonted display of brotherliness, thought to himself, "After all, it is well that everybody does not think of these things as I do! André there, with his long head, will make the money go twice as far as I could." And he shook hands heartily with the possessor of the long head, and with his wife (a lady in every respect a match for her husband), who, while outwardly all complaisance to Jacob, was inwardly muttering, "Poor fool!"

The "fool" was, at any rate, a very happy fool, as he joyfully turned his back upon formal, ceremonious Berlin, and, hastening to Leipzig, relinquished the situation in which he had starved for several years as assistant in a laboratory. Now, at length, he felt himself free to enter upon his *beau-idéal* of existence, since the income at his disposal was amply sufficient for his simple wants. He retired to the little village of Kirchenstein, where an old college friend was

located as pastor, and took a long lease of the hunting-lodge attached to the castle—at that time in a ruinous, tumble-down condition, but possessed of an attraction irresistible to our philosopher, in the shape of an out-building easily convertible into a spacious laboratory. The weeks flew rapidly by in superintending the restoration of the place, and in furnishing with Frau Imri's help such portion of it as he required. Then came the final journey to Leipzig, the triumphal home-bringing of the precious store of instruments and chemicals, and Jacob Müller was the happiest of men. His days were spent in intense study, his evenings at the parsonage, where he ate his soup and smoked his pipe with all the better relish for his long day's solitude and hard work.

Time passed on, and the name of Jacob Müller became famous throughout the length and breadth of Germany; Göttingen created him a Ph.D., and beyond the limits of Fatherland his treatises on crystallography and other kindred subjects were known to most of the European *savans*. Still he remained comparatively poor; for, although admitted on all sides to be the man who had penetrated most deeply into his own department of science, yet his works were so abstruse as to be sealed books to all but a very few, and it was these few who reaped the substantial benefit of his discoveries, for they could speak of them to the world in brilliant and glowing language, or could turn them to practical account.

In extreme vexation Imri would often dilate upon this to his friend, and urge him for his own sake to follow out his investigations to what he termed the *money-point*. To all such remonstrances Müller had but one invariable answer. "My dear fellow," he would say, "it is impossible. Every one has his *forte*, and money-making certainly is not mine. Why, the case lies in a nutshell. Science is a mine. I am far down in it—farther, perhaps, than most people—let that be as it may! Now, does it stand to reason that I should leave my post which has cost so much toil to reach, merely to carry the ore to the mouth of the pit? No, no! my vocation is to make discoveries, and hand them over to those who can bring them into daylight, and turn them to the best possible use." Having delivered himself of this sentiment, the Doctor would refill his pipe, and look on with quiet amusement, while Imri vented his indignation by striding up and down the room, shaking his fist at some invisible offender, and otherwise employing the thousand-and-one harmless expedients wherewith a choleric man may cool himself without running full tilt against his adversary.

Another cause that operated successfully against Müller's becoming wealthy was his love of Art—a passion which absorbed every spare *krentzer*. In his occasional journeys to consult his publishers at Leipzig, and to attend scientific meetings there or elsewhere, rarely could he withstand the temptation

of paying a visit to the different galleries and studies, of which he had the *entrée*; and many a time the sum he had just received from Messrs. Schwartz and Weiss—the product of a year's toil—was not an hour in his pocket before it had again changed owners, and Müller found himself as poor as when he first left home, but the possessor of a few square inches of canvas, out of which he conjured for himself a world of delight.

When he first began to collect, people said that he was no judge; that he sometimes bought positive trash. In this, as in other things, the Doctor paid little heed to the opinion of others; he chose what pleased himself. No doubt his taste was peculiar; he knew nothing whatever of the rules of Art—of perspective, *chiaroscuro*, atmospheric effects, and the rest of the Art-phrases, he was profoundly ignorant, and would wander among what were commonly reputed masterpieces with a blank, unappreciative look, which would have enraged beyond expression Messieurs the critics had they deemed his opinion worthy of their attention. Of a sudden he would stop, generally before some quiet little painting that had been overlooked by the majority. "Ah!" he would say, "there's *geist* here!" and forthwith that picture was visible to his mind's eye in some particular niche of his little *salon* at home.

What it was that Müller meant by the designation *geist* he could never be brought to explain; and the

reader must, consequently, not look to us for any definition of that most untranslatable of words. Call it mind, soul, fancy, wit—what you will—some inexplicable community of feeling between himself and the painter peeped out of the canvas in the countenance of the Madonna embracing the child Jesus; or in a still forest scene, where the leafy canopy overhead was intersected by stray gleams of sunlight, playing between the tall stems and among the rabbit-holes at their roots, as though seeking some means of egress; or in the searching glance of a pair of bright blue eyes, supposed to belong to some cardinal, but looking out upon the world in a much more straightforward manner than is generally attributed to the wearer of the “hat.” What it was *specially* that attracted the Doctor in these and similar paintings we cannot pretend to say; but it is a curious fact that, notwithstanding his ignorance of technicalities, his collection contained several which afterwards came to be regarded as the *chefs-d’œuvre* of their authors, who—at the time of their acquaintance with Müller unknown, struggling men—gradually asserted their right to worthy places in the Temple of Fame.

Time passed on; the little *salon* at the lodge became a real Art-cabinet, radiant with many a gem; but the great painter, who dealt so gently with the pictured forms, had not been equally lenient towards the toiling student,—nay, had employed

upon him his most sombre colours. Not yet fifty, Müller was prematurely old; his hair had long been grey, his figure bowed, his face furrowed with the impress of anxious thought; and it was when he had arrived at this stage, not before, that he surprised the whole of his little world by bringing a wife to cheer his lonely home. For years it had been the earnest wish of the Frau Pastorin to see him united to some one worthy of him, and to this end she had tried all the numberless transparent artifices that women generally set in motion on such occasions. She had invited all her eligible young lady friends to stay with her by turns, and every little wile had been diligently practised to catch the unconscious Doctor in the meshes of a flirtation. Any one inexperienced in these matters may imagine that he must have proved an easy prey,—he was so childlike and simple, so absorbed in his own pursuits, so innocent of the ways of the world; but his very guilelessness prevented the desired consummation. It never occurred to him that a young girl in all the bloom and freshness of youth could see anything lovable in a grey, middle-aged man like himself; and thus, for long, the prize escaped every one. If the subject of matrimony ever entered the Doctor's head, it was as quickly banished by a revolution seen with the eye of prophetic fancy, wherein his beloved crucibles and retorts were summarily ejected to make way

for cradles and rocking-horses. "Of what use," he was wont to say, when pressed rather hard by the Frau Pastorin, "would a wife be to me? What could *she* do in that mine where I mean to spend all my days?" "Why, hold the torch, to be sure!" maintained the little woman. "A man—no matter what his work—is labouring on in the dark if he have not some one by his side to take an interest in it second only to his own, to share in the glow of success, or lend a ready sympathy in discouragement."

It was long before our Doctor saw the need of this second self. How the change was effected would require more space to describe than we have at our disposal, since this is to be the history of the love-making of Arnold Müller, not of his father. We can only hint that in the Doctor's own peculiar fashion a wife was wooed and won—a lady whose countenance bore the same mysterious imprint that attracted him in his pictures — a gentle loving woman with deep, earnest eyes, into which one might look for ever and see nothing but what was pure and true; and under their influence the old lodge blossomed out into new life and beauty, shone with the light of beaming faces, and rang with the merry laugh and pattering feet of children.

Concerning the early days of our hero (Arnold Müller is to be the hero *par excellence* of the following pages) history hath not recorded much, owing, probably, to the absence from the scene of

any fond, chronicling grandmother or maiden aunt. On the testimony of Pastor Imri, however (whose pupil he was until his thirteenth year, and whose veracity is beyond dispute), we vouch for the three following facts :—First, that he made the same number of hair-breadth escapes, and *almost* broke his every limb, as often as the generality of only sons ; secondly, that he evinced a marked repugnance to his father's laboratory, and could by no means be tempted within its mysterious and odoriferous precincts ; lastly, that he was of a decidedly, in the pastor's opinion, *indolent*, according to his good mother's, *dramatic*, turn, inasmuch as he greatly preferred arraying himself in an old helmet which he had discovered in a garret, and brandishing his tin sword against the enemies of Goetz with the Iron Hand, to facing those to be met with in his Latin grammar.

With the boy's advancing years, however, a certain talent began to develop itself slowly, but powerfully. What are the invisible agents at work in the depths of that most complex and delicate of force-producers, a child's mind, we do not know. The external influences by which Arnold was surrounded may not have been without weight : the calm, grand utterances of nature—every autumn sunset, every changing tint on the hill-side, every roaring mountain-torrent, speaking to him in a language all the more significant on account of his solitary life and

his lack of young companions. The simple, untutored peasant-folk among whom he was thrown—with their quaint, old-world ways, and their superstitious fancies peopling every wood with its fairy inhabitants, every mountain-hollow with its guardian Gnome, every brook with its Undine. The weird light emanating from his father's study window of a winter's night—red, purple, green by turns—now suddenly extinguished, again flashing out with an appalling vividness that cast a demoniacal glare across the pure, untrodden snow, and threw out in dark relief the background of firs; while within the necromancer bent over his writing, or moved to and fro between his furnace and his test-glasses with countenance so sternly intent, and beard so cabalistically long, that Hans might well be excused for crossing himself as he hurried past. Or—and most probable of all—the stolen delight of those lingering summer evenings when a little white-robed figure, supposed to be snugly in bed, would silently appear on the dark staircase, and, seating himself by the window, listen to the entrancing melodies that floated upwards from his mother's piano, until the deep blue vault without appeared to him Heaven itself unfolding, and the stars the beaming, kindly eyes of the angels. Each of these may have left its impress on a sensitive nature.

But when, and in what manner, the poetic instinct first begins to flutter within the breast

must always be a mystery, even to the individual himself; and in Arnold's case it was not until he had attained his thirteenth year that any particular bent began to display itself *openly*. Then he grew retiring and studious, and seemed to have lost all zest for outdoor sports. The Count's hounds might bay, and the horn echo through the woods in vain; Arnold no longer rushed delightedly to take part in the chase. All day long he sat at his piano, absorbed in the tone-pictures of the old masters, or endeavouring to assimilate his own crude harmonies to the full swell of theirs. The father and mother silently remarked this, and were therefore not unprepared when he informed them of his earnest desire to become a musician. Great as was Müller's disappointment at the frustration of his secretly-cherished hope that he should one day see his son following in his steps as a scientific investigator, the bitter experience of his own early days raised its warning voice against any forcing of the boy's inclinations; and he yielded to his wish, with the stipulation that the decision should not be finally made until Arnold had gone through his full college course, when, if he continued true to his choice, the Doctor promised no longer to withhold his consent.

In pursuance of this wise resolution—wise in more senses than one—Arnold proceeded to the gymnasium at Z——, and afterwards studied at the famous *Alma Mater* of the same place, the

scene of the Doctor's academical exploits, bringing home every year a load of honours, which caused the worthy pastor to shed tears of joy over his former incorrigible pupil, and the father to be more vexed than ever at his son's unfortunate aversion to science. But with maturing thought, Arnold still held to the purpose of his boyhood, and in this he was silently supported by his mother, from whom he had inherited his musico-æsthetic temperament. Consequently, in spite of the Doctor's praiseworthy resolution to allow his son's talent free bent, there began to appear on the horizon of the family peace the faintest possible indication of a cloud. But this was not destined to assume any troublesome magnitude, for before the conclusion of Arnold's third year at college, he was hastily summoned home by tidings of his father's severe illness, and ere the lapse of many days the good old Doctor's explorations in the mine of science had ceased for ever on this side the grave, and he had entered upon his well-earned rest.

The effect of this sudden blow on the young man, who had regarded his father with the deepest reverence and affection, was overwhelming. He seemed for a time stunned, and it was perhaps well that the immediate necessity for exertion—that most unwelcome but most effectual of all remedies—came to his aid, and forced him to rouse himself. On examination of the Doctor's affairs, it was discovered that the little sum he had been

able to lay aside, together with what might be realized by the sale of the pictures, would barely suffice to provide for the widow and her daughters; henceforth Arnold must depend upon himself. The collection found a ready purchaser in the Graf von Kirchenstein, who, himself a *connoisseur*, had often cast longing eyes on the treasures at the Lodge, which were now transferred with as little delay as possible to the gallery at the castle. The naked walls of the *salon* struck a fresh chill of desolation to the hearts of Arnold and his mother, for long years accustomed to the glowing tints of the creations that had lent so refined a charm to the old house.

"This is the last sacrifice you shall make, mother," said Arnold, as they stood together in the empty room, now for the first time realizing the sting of poverty.

"I do not regret any of them except the Madonna," answered the mother, tearfully. "It was a necessity to part with the rest, in our circumstances we had no right to them, but I think your uncle might have let me retain *that*; to me it is inseparably bound up with all my married life; some day, perhaps, I shall tell you how and why—but not yet, not yet!" and overcome by the varied emotions suggested by the loss of the painting, she hurried from the room.

Indignant at this disclosure of heartlessness on the part of his uncle (who, as sole executor, had

made every arrangement on his own responsibility, without much regard to the wishes of the widow), Arnold lost no time in seeking the Count and exacting from him a promise that the Madonna should be his whenever he was in a position to redeem it.

This little incident added zest to the satisfaction with which he reflected on his own refusal to accept a seat in the counting-house at Berlin, offered him with much pomposity by his uncle. The latter was exceedingly irritated by this unexpected rebuff, for, having no children of his own, he had secretly resolved on adopting his clever nephew.

"Go, sir!" he cried, in a white heat; "take your own way, and, like your father before you, starve—or beg!"

Arnold, however, had no intention of doing either; his plans were already laid. In his father's desk he had discovered a letter addressed to Herr Kapellmeister Bergmann, director of the world-renowned Conservatorium at Städtlein, and an old friend of the Doctor. As this referred to himself and his purpose of becoming an artist, he had no doubt about his father's intention in writing it, and therefore forwarded it to the Director, together with a few lines of his own, briefly stating the circumstances in which he was placed, and requesting his advice. The next post brought a kindly answer from Herr Bergmann in which he sympathized with the calamity that had thus unexpectedly overtaken the family,

and intimated his willingness to receive Arnold into his house, promising him every facility in the completion of his studies, in return for his services as secretary. An opportunity such as this, offering the prospect of daily intercourse with one of the leading composers of the day, presented itself in glowing colours to Arnold, and in a very short time the preliminary arrangements were settled.

Having now formally gone through the ceremony of introduction, we may return to the high road, where we left Arnold on his way to Städtlein.

CHAPTER III.

STADTLEIN.

As he looked at the retreating cloud of dust, Arnold asked himself if what had occurred could by any possibility be only a waking dream, conjured up by his imagination. He could not shake off the notion that he had met the party before—where, he could not tell—their faces, gestures, modes of expression, all seemed familiar to him. After trying in vain to discover some solution of the mystery, he gave up the attempt in despair, and betook himself to the tangible pledge of the reality of the adventure.

“Now,” thought he, “if this had happened in the olden time, I might have considered myself a veritable *preux-chevalier*, for I have not only rescued a damsel, young and lovely, but I hold her token in my hand.”

He examined the ring, which glanced brilliantly in the sunshine. It was a diamond, encircled by rubies; within, the inscription, “To A. C.” A. Chesney, undoubtedly; but the A.; what might that represent? Arnold hastily ran over all the English female names with which he was acquainted, “Anna? Ada? Amy? Alice?—Yes, Alice Chesney,

that would do; she looked like an *Alice*." What appearance a bearer of that appellation is bound exactly to present would have puzzled our hero to explain; but he had recently been reading "*Woodstock*," and was perfectly satisfied as to the suitability of the name for the donor of the gift, which he proceeded to fit on his little finger. Alas! in spite of all his efforts, it would not be persuaded to pass the first joint, and he was thus forced to wear it ignominiously in his pocket.

By the time he had made this mortifying discovery, the little inn at X—— was in sight. In the courtyard stood the elegant barouche of the English family; but as the horses were on the point of being harnessed to his own humbler equipage, Arnold had no leisure to renew his acquaintance. Hastily swallowing a cup of coffee, he took his seat outside; the horn sounded once, twice, thrice! Jehu cracked his whip, and they were off.

Exchanging the coach for the rail at noon, he arrived in Städtlein towards evening, not a little fatigued by the long journey. The driver of the cab which he hailed for the conveyance of himself and chattels, proved fortunately to be acquainted with Herr Bergmann's private address, otherwise Arnold might have found himself in a dilemma, as the Director had omitted to date his letter.

The carriage took its way through close, dark streets, paved with small stones that seemed to

have been originally placed perpendicularly, and to have gradually worked themselves into a slanting position, where they remained—an effectual barrier to all convenient locomotion, a standing protest against nineteenth century *go-aheadism*. Arnold, whose experiences of town life had been confined to the somewhat modern area of Z——, was not prepared for such barbarism. At the sudden transition from the smooth, broad *platz* before the station, to this ingeniously-planned rack, he was violently thrown from one side of the coach to the other, and all but precipitated head-foremost into a side-gutter, which, overflowing with a reddish fluid, monopolized a considerable portion of the narrow space. Congratulating himself upon having escaped this unsavoury fate, and guarding against the possibility of it by taking a firm hold, he examined the gutter with a critical eye, to ascertain whence its peculiar colour originated. A neighbouring dye-work was finally credited by him with the cause of the unwonted appearance—but, ye gods! what would have been his consternation had he, fresh from country scenes, learned then, as he subsequently did, that to the pork-butcher's at the corner the mystery must be traced—it being slaughter-day!

O Germania! nation of philosophers and artists! do none of your men of science perceive the odours that pervade your streets? Does your æsthetic sense receive no shock from the unlovely sights to be seen

therein ? What third-rate English town but would blush to own a pavement like that adorning the greater part of Städtlein, where the meeting of two foot-passengers necessitates the descent of one into the ditch !

Every now and again Arnold caught a glimpse of broad, open streets, with splendid shops, and occasionally even of handsome public buildings, surrounded by grass and trees ; but his driver evinced so decided a predilection for the murky shade of back-lanes, that our traveller was not sorry when he finally stopped.

A little way beyond the fortifications stood the house of the Director—to all appearance neither large nor handsome, yet he was often heard to declare that he would not exchange it for “the finest palace within the town walls.” One reason of this preference may have been that it was not built after the German fashion. Herr Bergmann had lived long enough in England to value the privacy of his “castle.” But probably to him the great attraction consisted in its proximity to the river, which flowed but a few paces from it, deep and blue, widening in its progress to the sea. Arnold was ushered into a spacious apartment, evidently the Director’s study, where he had ample leisure to make observations, since—for what seemed to him an interminable time—no one appeared.

In the middle stood a grand piano, open, and littered from end to end with sheets of music,

MSS., and printed papers. One side of the room was completely occupied by an ancient, quaintly-carved, oak book-case, ornamented in the Flemish style with heads of grinning cherubs, and filled with fat, dignified folios, than which no lighter literature was admitted. On a nearer inspection they proved to be standard editions of oratorio-scores—Bach, Handel, Graun, Mendelssohn. Opposite was a marble table, covered with heaps of geological and other specimens awaiting classification—bits of lava, coral, shells, sea-weeds, dried Alpine plants, fragments of quartz and granite, lay huddled together in woful confusion. In the bay window was an *escritoire*, and by it on a bracket a statuette of Parian marble. A huge, white porcelain stove took up one corner. Before it was spread a leopard's skin, the paws and tail extended, the head stuffed to form a footstool, beside which stood an easy-chair within convenient reach of a swing-shelf. On the latter was displayed a collection of *meerschaums*, so extensive and elaborate, that one might imagine them to be intended for the nucleus of a museum destined to the honour of the Weed. The Director was evidently a man of martial as well as antiquarian tastes, for fire-arms of various kinds hung from the walls, in juxtaposition to musical instruments of shapes so curious and strange, that Arnold, having ransacked his memory in vain to recollect either their names or uses,

came to the conclusion that they must be the sackbut and psaltry which his infantile ideas had confounded with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. On a side-table lay four large leathern cases, evidently in readiness for a quartette.

One picture, and one alone, adorned the apartment, a pencil-sketch of a young and beautiful girl in bridal dress; underneath, in Herr Bergmann's handwriting: "Mala, 18—; from memory." With surprise Arnold recognised the features to be those of the statuette; he seemed to have involuntarily discovered one of the Director's secrets, and turning hastily away, retreated to the window, the view from which certainly justified Herr Bergmann's peculiar fancy for living in so unfashionable a quarter.

Beneath rippled the magnificent stream, its surface broken into an infinity of tiny, crested ridges, spanned at some distance by a noble bridge; nearer, by one formed of boats, which swayed gently to and fro in the evening breeze. All was life, gaiety, motion. Multitudes of little ships, their brown patched sails full spread, flitted hither and thither in the sunshine, like gigantic butterflies. An immense raft of timber from the hilly districts drifted down the swift, silent current towards the sea, its course guided by two men, who sat in the door of their wooden hut, calmly smoking their pipes, as those to whom the word "hurry" was unknown.

This was Arnold's first glimpse of a great river,

and the sight possessed for him a peculiar fascination. He gazed long and earnestly upon it, tracing its course upwards, as far as the eye could reach, to the horizon, where the distant mountains lifted their clear outline against the sky—downwards, following in thought its tortuous windings to their termination in the ocean. Gradually, there stole upon him one of the restless moods to which we are all subject at times. Physical exhaustion, and perhaps a little *pique* at the neglect of his new friends, no doubt contributed their quota to the spirit of dissatisfaction that now overpowered him, causing the scene before him to contract, to lose its charm, while he felt an irresistible longing to burst all bonds, to escape to the immeasurable regions beyond. He stood for a while absorbed—forgetful alike of place and time—and drawing a deep breath, exclaimed: “After all, this is not the world!”

He had learned from his father the habit of speaking his thoughts aloud, addressing *himself* in lieu of better company.

“Indeed, young man!” said a voice behind him, “and pray, what may you consider the *world*?”

Arnold started violently; the thoughts in which he had just been indulging were certainly not those he would choose to reveal to a stranger. Turning, he perceived a little old gentleman in a gorgeous, oriental-looking dressing-gown, his iron-grey hair

covered by a velvet smoking-cap, between his fingers a cigar, at which he puffed away vigorously. The new-comer was spare and short; as they stood together Arnold felt that he towered about a head and shoulders above him, but notwithstanding, he blushed like a girl (mentally stigmatizing himself as an "idiot" for so doing) beneath the sharp, somewhat quizzical glances darted at him by a pair of keen, bright eyes from behind their entrenchment of shaggy brow.

"Well," repeated the Director (for he it was, as Arnold well knew from a portrait in his possession), evidently enjoying the young man's confusion, "and so you don't intend this to be your world, eh?"

"Not at all!" cried Arnold, making a desperate effort to extricate himself; "I had been admiring your beautiful river, and—and was naturally led on, I suppose, by tracing its course, to picture to myself what lies beyond." The allusion to the river was a masterstroke, although not intended as such. The Director was mollified.

"Yes," he said, gazing lovingly upon it; "I know of no sight more suggestive than a river; and to me no prospect on earth is so delightful as this glorious old stream, which I hope you will learn to love as I do. But," he continued more seriously, "I have been watching you for some time, my young friend—you were too intent upon your own thoughts to notice my entrance—and I have a faint idea of what

was passing in your mind. Let me advise you, as an old man, one who has seen a good deal of what people call the *world*, not to begin by attaching that name to any outward accident of circumstance or place. Create a world for yourself! Depend upon it, mind alone gives shape and value to all material things, and he who is true to himself in the development of his own nature, his own world, may be perfectly independent of all else."

To this Arnold silently bowed assent, although he took the liberty of thinking: "Such reasoning may be very natural to you, who have seen and enjoyed the world in my sense!"

The Director suddenly recollected that this must seem rather an extraordinary reception to his new secretary, for he threw away the end of his cigar, and said, "Come! this is but a poor welcome after your long journey, Arnold; you will allow me to call you so, will you not?"

"Certainly," returned Arnold, smiling, "I should prefer it."

"Your father was *Müller* to me," continued the Director, as a shade crossed his face; "for many years we lived together like brothers, in Leipzig. Latterly he became so absorbed in his writings, and I in mine, that we had little leisure to keep up the old friendship. I hope to renew it in his son," and the kindly smile that accompanied these words lit up the rugged features with a pleasant sunshine.

"I must get my sister to show you the rooms she has had prepared for you," he added; "we sup (or, as I suppose you young folks prefer to say, *dine*) in less than half an hour."

As he spoke he threw open the door, and called loudly, "Sister! sister Martha!" a summons which was answered by a lady, to whom our hero was formally introduced, and to whose favour he was specially commended. The good lady acknowledged Arnold's bow with a curtsy so profound, that he felt quite embarrassed, fearing that his part of the ceremony had not been sufficiently polite. All anxiety on this score, however, was dispelled by a glance which revealed a pleasant, gentle face, with soft, brown eyes, timid in their expression as those of a fawn. Associated with this, Arnold received a certain impression of oddness which induced him to look again, and this time he noticed that the left cheek was marked by a deep red scar, and the thin grey hair parted on one side, and drawn tightly over the top of the head, probably to conceal a similar disfigurement there.

Fräulein Martha conducted him through the intricate windings of the house (which was in reality much larger than its exterior indicated) to the apartments appropriated to his use. Very pleasant they were—the sitting-room especially, with its large sunny window, piano, bookshelves, flowers, and host of nicknacks, giving it an air of home. Arnold's

honest praise of all the arrangements fairly won the good housewife's heart, and she withdrew, to superintend the arrangements for supper, thinking to herself: "A very modest, ingenuous youth!—one has some pleasure in taking trouble for those who can appreciate. Thank God! all the world is not like poor, dear Gottlob, who never knows when the dust is lying an inch thick among his books!"

Pending the arrival of his effects, Arnold went to the window, which gave upon a large, old-fashioned garden, with mossy patriarchs of fruit-trees, hedges of roses, and walls concealed by clambering vines. In the centre of a grassy lawn he noticed a peculiar arbour—an immense willow, whose branches were bent down to the ground on all sides, forming an inner circle of cool shade; on the bench within he could dimly discern a figure. Presently the leaves were thrust aside, and a young girl emerged; in her hand a nosegay, which she had evidently just been arranging.

As she sauntered slowly towards the house, plucking here and there a choice flower, Arnold caught a full glimpse of her face. His heart beat fast and loud: where had he seen those finely-chiselled features—the high brow, the dark eye with its sweeping fringe, the delicate chin? where that exquisitely formed head, with its rippling masses of fair, silken hair? Suddenly there flashed upon him the picture and the bust in the Director's study.

Yes! beyond a doubt he had the original of both before his eyes. And yet, on second thoughts, the date underneath the portrait forbade the possibility of such a supposition, as the "Mala" represented by it must needs be now a middle-aged woman, unless, indeed, she were no creature of mortal birth, but a being from some brighter sphere! Arnold half inclined to the latter idea as he watched her fitting in her white dress among the trees, every movement so light and replete with a dainty grace, that he expected momentarily to see the traditional pair of wings unfold, and bear her up to what appeared her natural element.

From such fancies he was roused by a tap at the door, which, in obedience to his "Come in!" was thrown open by a masculine-looking woman, tall and gaunt, with fiery-red hair. "The ogress who guards my fairy princess!" thought Arnold. The ogress proved, however, to be only Ursula the chambermaid, come to announce the arrival of his luggage.

When once more alone, Arnold turned again to the window. His princess was seated on the grass, tying together a few early rosebuds; by her stood the Director, the dressing-gown exchanged for an evening suit; in his mouth the everlasting cigar, whose faint blue smoke floated round the head of the young girl like a cloud of incense. He was looking down at her with a proud, fond glance that

left no doubt of the relationship between them. "Here, papa!" she cried, springing up, when satisfied at length with her taste, "this is for you, but only on condition that you wear it to-night."

"Little puss," said her father, placing the roses in his buttonhole with a pleased air, "people will imagine that the old fellow wishes to fancy himself young again!" He added something in a low tone, which caused the girl to dart a bright glance towards Arnold's window. Our hero retired precipitately, and, as he hoped, unobserved, behind the curtain, and proceeded in all haste with his toilette.

Hardly had he finished, when a thundering bell announced the evening meal, and he set out in search of the dining-room. No easy matter! After traversing endless passages that seemed to have a spite against him, which they gratified by converging in one point, namely, the spot whence he had set out, he found himself at the door of the apartment where he had left the Director. Here, to his great relief, he was rescued by a servant, who conducted him downstairs to a long room, in which the family were already assembled at dinner. The Director, who was engaged in an eager discussion with a gentleman on his right, did not notice Arnold's entrance, and he slipped quietly into the place reserved for him by Fraülein Martha.

In the intervals of repose which that lady's hospitable desire to amuse allowed him, he contrived to

steal a glance round the table in quest of his princess. There she was, close to her father, but, fortunately, on the same side as himself, otherwise it is doubtful how he would have fared; and after a long day's journey, beef and mutton form a more substantial supper than can be extracted by admiring glances from even the prettiest face in the world.

The other members of the party were two: a tall, red-faced man, whom Arnold took to be a captain in the maritime service, and who appeared so very drowsy that he could neither open his eyes to their full extent, nor rouse himself to eat his soup in other than a mechanical, unappreciative fashion, which must have gone to the hostess's heart. By him sat a little, thin, shrivelled, old man, who took no heed of anything or anybody at table, but was completely engrossed in his own reflections, which could hardly have been of a pleasant nature, as they led him not only to sigh in a most depressing manner, but also to shake his head like a Chinese mandarin. He sighed when he helped himself to salt, sighed when his soup was gone, and shook his head over the pickled plums in so mournful and despondent a way, that Arnold became alarmed, and called *Fräulein Martha's* attention to it.

"Bless me!" ejaculated the good lady, "I quite forgot that the *Alte* cannot eat plums. Fritz, fetch the preserved pears!"

This remedy proved effectual, for no sooner had

the old gentleman transferred the whole contents of the dish to his plate, than he gave a prolonged sigh—this time, one of relief—and the shaking of the head discontinued for a while.

“Poor dear Alte!” said the aunt, in a loud whisper; “very peculiar!—not to be wondered at!—nearly seventy!”

Arnold’s attention, however, was most strongly attracted to the person at the Director’s right hand, a dark, sallow man, with a countenance whose exceeding earnestness bordered on sternness, not unmingled with a certain air of proud reserve, evident in every turn of the head, in the dignified bearing, the compressed lips. They were discussing some topic—the merits of a new work, Arnold concluded, from the fragments that floated down to him between aunt Martha’s little rivulets of talk; he tried to make sense out of them, but was forced to abandon the attempt in despair.

“Yes, as I was saying, Herr Müller, Städtlein is not so disagreeable a town as strangers seem to fancy”—“the ‘Flying Dutchman’ not performed in England!”—“my poor father occupied that house by the West Gate: no doubt you noticed it as you passed to-day?”—“far too misty a subject; won’t take the popular taste”—“but I daresay you can understand, Herr Müller, that my time must be a good deal occupied”—“bah! don’t tell me! never be appreciated out of Germany”—“I don’t know what

servants are coming to"—"chorus in C sharp minor"—and so on, till he suddenly discovered that aunt Martha was offering to act as his cicerone to the churches in Städtlein, which, she was informing him, were alone well worth a journey to see. He thanked her for her kindness, and resumed his observation of the two at the head of the table. Suddenly a clear voice struck upon his ear :—

"Now, Wallraf, are you not done with Wagner and his opera? I am so tired of him!"

Arnold leaned slightly forward, and observed the young girl, her cheeks tinged at her own audacity in venturing to interrupt so learned a discussion. Herr von Wallraf also glanced at the sweet blushing face; his grimness relaxed—he even smiled.

"So, Mala, you take no interest in the music of the Future?"

"Decidedly not so much as in that of the Present," replied the young lady, laughing. "Papa has some news about Lucien; good news, which I am longing to hear. He has kept me in suspense all day. Do ask him what it is, Wallraf! he will tell you."

"You foolish Mala!" said her father, pinching her ear, "you imagine everybody to be as much interested in Lucien as we ourselves are!"

"Now don't tease me any longer, papa. What is it? Lucien has got an appointment?"

"Precisely! Lucien is now Herr Kapellmeister, Concertmeister, Musik-director, or the three rolled in

one, to His Most Serene Highness the Grand Duke of Little Tübingen. Six months hence you will doubtless hear of his being presented by his admirers with an elaborate *taktstock*!" *i. e., bâton.*

"Indeed! I am glad to hear that," said Herr von Wallraf, a little coldly, Arnold thought; while Mala exclaimed, her face aglow with delight, "O glorious! charming! Our Lucien *Kapellmeister*! Father, how could you keep it from me?"

"Our Lucien!" thought Arnold, as a pang shot through him.

The aunt having duly expressed her astonishment and delight at the unexpected intelligence, the red-faced captain woke up, so far as to say solemnly, in a gruff voice, "Let us drink his health!"

"To be sure!" said the Director.

The bowl was brought, the punch mixed, the glasses filled; then the whole party stood—with the exception of the Alte, who remained obstinately seated, shaking his head in a more ominous way than ever.

"Come, Alte!" said Herr Bergmann, "we are going to drink to Lucien!" Still the old man went on sighing to himself, as though he had heard nothing.

"Never mind him," whispered Mala; "he has one of his curious fits to-day."

"Here, then, my friends, I give you—Success to Kapellmeister Lucien!"

"Kapellmeister Lucien!" was echoed by the whole party, as *alla tedesca* everybody's glass clinked against that of everybody else.

"Arnold!" said the Director, nodding to him as he resumed his seat, "may yours be the next appointment we celebrate!"

Even this kindly wish did not succeed in removing an undefinable feeling of jealousy which had sprung up within him regarding this Lucien. Who and what could he be? Arnold knew that Herr Bergmann had but one child; whence, then, this evident interest displayed by Mala?—*our* Lucien! He was still engaged with these unpleasing reflections when they rose from table, and he was formally introduced to the somnolent captain—who proved to be no captain at all, but professor at the Conservatorium—Schenk by name. Von Wallraf, whom Arnold well knew by repute as one of the greatest pianists of the day, was also a colleague of the Director. Both received him cordially, the name and reputation of his father being familiar to them; but each evinced his feeling in his own way—Schenk shook him heartily by the hand, and welcomed him as a promising recruit; Wallraf gave him a flashing glance, and hoped "that he would work as well in the cause of Art as his father had done in that of Science." Arnold looked round for the little old gentleman, but he had vanished. Mala, who had also silently disappeared, now returned,

arrayed in a bewitching little scarlet cloak and hood, and informed her father that the carriage was at the door.

"What, already!" cried the Director, pulling out his watch; "a quarter to eight! We must be off at once. Do you care to accompany us, Arnold?—this is the evening of my Bach Society."

Arnold excused himself, on the plea of his long journey.

"Then I must leave you in my sister's hands, and bid you 'good night,' as I shall probably not see you on my return."

He hastily left the room, followed by his friends. Mala lingered, ostensibly for the purpose of drawing on her gloves.

"Adieu, Herr Müller," she said, extending her hand frankly, adding, with a laugh, "Papa always forgets to introduce me—I am Mala."

"Adieu, Fräulein," said the young man, bending over the little hand with a chivalrous respect that brought a shade of wonder into the innocent eyes.

"Mala! Mala!" sounded from outside. The aunt hurried in with a load of wrappings for her pet, and in a moment they were gone.

The room became gloomy and dark, and aunt Martha's little commonplaces insufferably tedious. Arnold felt wretched and weary, and was not sorry to retire soon to his room. Spite of his fatigue, however, it was long before he could fall asleep;

he found himself incessantly rehearsing the day's adventures—his early walk, the scene by the river, the *hauteur* of the English clergyman, the sick youth, the railway journey, Wallraf's face, passed by turns before his fancy. When at length slumber came to his aid, it was broken by visions through which coursed carriage after carriage, each occupied by Mala, and drawn by runaway horses, which were courageously stopped by some one whom he instinctively knew to be Lucien—some one who was always first on the shore, preventing him from distinguishing himself, and whom he finally knocked down with a *taktstock*; whereupon there rose up in the distance two violet eyes, sorrowful, reproachful, filled with tears—but they were not Mala's eyes: they belonged to the donor of the ring.

CHAPTER IV.

"OF NOBLE RACE WAS SHENKIN!"

SIR ROBERT CHESNEY (nephew to the reverend gentleman whose acquaintance we made on the X—— high road) was the descendant of a long line of ancestors, every one of whom had in his turn acquired so much additional *prestige* (in his own eyes) from being the representative of a pedigree one remove longer than that of his father before him, that it became difficult for a mere outsider to picture to himself the head of the family condescending, after the lapse of a few generations more, to associate in anywise with ordinary mortals.

This overweening sense of superiority may be partly explained by the fact, that the claims of fifty centred almost exclusively in one individual, for (the estates being strictly entailed) it was found necessary to turn the younger members of the house adrift at a very early age upon the world, where their buffetings with the waves of Fortune speedily caused them to lose all reverence for the genealogical tree. Some of them even went so far as to call that venerable relic an "antiquated humbug—striking its roots

down into the soil, and spreading its branches in solitary state over the broad acres which ought by rights to have been equally divided amongst all." These malcontents, be it observed, were only such as had made shipwreck of their own endeavours. As to the more successful scions of the house, it was somewhat remarkable that in logical ratio to their prosperity in life grew their leaning to the family failing; they made use of it, in fact, as a Ladder to preferment: and "my uncle the baronet," "my grandfather the general," would roll from the lips of the rising barrister or embryo dean with a melodious pomposity that must have been impossible to the briefless lawyer or the starving curate of a few years before.

As we have said, however, the duty of maintaining the dignity of the family devolved mainly on the reigning baronet, by whom it was generally regarded as the paramount interest of life, to which all others were merely of secondary consideration; the ancient lineage was the sun of the house, round which its wealth, talents, friends and neighbours, revolved as satellites—at a respectful distance.

This being the case, we may be sure that its traditions dated back farther than the Conquest—a comparatively modern episode in the Chesney history—since the lands had been owned by Thanets of that name for generations before the first intelligible record shows us Simon of Chesney fighting gallantly

by the side of Harold. The son of this hero afterwards took refuge in the camp of Hereward, but must in some way have contrived to make his peace with the Norman, for he appears in the Domesday Book as proprietor, not only of Chesney, but the adjoining manor of Tonwich to boot. If the latter had been obtained by foul means, it did not remain long in the possession of the family. It was sold by the next lord to enable him to follow the standard of Robert of Normandy to the Holy Land, where he became enamoured of a Paynim maiden, whom he duly converted and espoused.

The rosary of this damsel, and the sword brought by her fond Crusader from Damascus, laid the foundation of a collection of relics as heterogeneous in its composition, and overwhelming in its demands upon credulity, as any to be found within ecclesiastical walls at Rome or elsewhere, but possessed of more value in the estimation of its owners than the crown jewels. Here, amongst other objects too numerous to specify, were preserved the battle-axe of Roger the Giant, who had wielded it in the cause of Matilda, a weapon which taxed the strength of his degenerate progeny to raise from the ground; the arrow which caused the death of Edwin Chesney at the Fair of Lincoln; the goblet of the merry Knight Richard, who was wont to make but one draught of his quart of sack; a pair of shoes nearly a yard in length, with silver chains attached, worn, by a dandy known as Lewis

the Long-legged, at the marriage of Richard II.; a scanty coat trimmed with miniver, which had decorated the person of Hugo Chesney, one of the first recipients of the Order of the Bath; and the plumed hat of a gentleman suspected by history (though not by the Chesney chronicle) of having run away at Marston Moor. By the side of the latter ought to have appeared the leathern jerkin of the redoubtable William, who had cast in his lot with Oliver and his Ironsides, as well as the broadsword of Robert, who had fought on the losing side at Culloden; both these unpleasantly suggestive articles, however, had been consigned to oblivion by the prudent descendants of their wearers—gentlemen who found their policy in a staunch adherence to the powers that be.

The old fiery spirit seemed to have come to an end with Robert Chesney—Robert the Devil, as he was familiarly nicknamed--and for several generations the family settled down into a sort of apathetic indifference to all party questions, basing their claims to public consideration on the merits of those who had acted a part in stormier times, while their self-importance assumed year by year more ungainly proportions, somewhat after the fashion of a plant which has run to seed, and thus contrived to overtop its humbler but more productive fellows. Judging of the later lords of Chesney, by the portraits which graced the gallery at the Place, as well as by the

anecdotes preserved regarding them, we are forced to conclude that (their dignity excepted) they were in no way distinguished from their neighbours of shorter pedigree and plebeian blood. Nay, we may be excused for conjecturing that a slight admixture of the latter might, after all, have been no undesirable element in the Chesney constitution, whose stream of vitality had undergone so constant a process of purification and refining through aristocratic marriages and inter-marriages, that there seemed some risk of its being deprived altogether of its baser but more essential qualities.

Closely connected with this predominating feature, pride of Birth, was another trait as characteristic of the Chesneys—pride of Will. The crest of the family—a mailed hand wielding an iron hammer, with the significant motto, "*I will*"—was exemplified by its members in every action of life, and by none more than by Sir Ralph, grandfather of the present baronet. The strength of will and inflexible determination that might have produced results the most valuable, had they been applied to purposes worthy of them, transformed their possessor (who had no ambition beyond the narrow bounds of his own estate) into a local oppressor and a domestic tyrant. Children, tenants, servants, alike he ruled with a rod of iron, and in general met with but feeble opposition; for those were not the days of railroads, neither had intellect begun its march among the

rural population; so, for a time the squire had it all his own way.

At last, however, the standard of revolt was raised—not in the village, nor among the tenantry, but in his own house, and by his eldest daughter, a young lady who had inherited no inconsiderable portion of her father's spirit, and who preferred a runaway match with her brothers' tutor to a marriage with the husband selected for her by Sir Ralph—a broken-down roué of sixty, with nothing in the world to recommend him but his blue blood, and his genius for winning at games of chance. With terrible bitterness Sir Ralph cursed the rebel in the presence of the assembled household, vowing that henceforth she should be dead to him, and extorting a promise from his remaining children never again to see or hold intercourse with her, as they valued his blessing. No temptation to disobedience presented itself to the young people; nothing more was heard of poor Kate; and Jenny, the younger daughter, who had neither her sister's energy nor resolution, was united to Captain Hawkesworth in less than a month.

After this nothing seemed to go well at the Place; Lady Chesney quietly fretted herself into the grave, whither she was soon followed by her second son, a fine young fellow of twenty, who had been destined for the Church. The latter event decided the fate of the youngest, Stephen, who was peremptorily recalled

from the academy where he had been pursuing his military studies, and directed to take the place of his deceased brother. In vain he pleaded his strong desire to enter the Army, and his consciousness of his own inability to undertake the sacred duties of a minister of the Gospel. Sir Ralph remained inexorable. Time out of mind, a Chesney had been Rector of Ilmington; the living was valuable, and in his own gift; therefore, willing or unwilling, Stephen must proceed to the University and qualify himself for the post. The young man had not arrived at a very reflective age; he disliked the ministry, but he disliked poverty infinitely more; the fate of his elder sister, who had been held up to him as a female Absalom ever since he could remember, turned the scale, and Stephen Chesney acquiesced in his father's wish. He took Holy Orders, and became, instead of a thorough soldier, a disappointed parish priest, feared by all for his powerful, gloomy nature, but beloved by few.

In due time, the eldest son succeeded to the property. He was a mild, amiable man (in all respects the reverse of his father), who had suffered for many years from ill-health, aggravated by the violent outbursts of Sir Ralph. He did not long enjoy his inheritance, but fell an early victim to the insidious disease that had carried off so many of his family, leaving his only child to the sole guardianship of his brother Stephen, in whose judgment and firmness

(qualities in which he himself had been deficient) he placed entire reliance. His widow, still a young woman, not yet thirty, resenting the fate which shut her out from all control over her boy, sought refuge in a second marriage, and thus Robert found himself, before he had entered upon his eighth year, an orphan, in the truest sense of the word.

When he was about fifteen, two events happened which totally changed the aspect of affairs at the Rectory: one was the death of Mrs. Chesney, the other the illness of Walter, the Rector's only son, who began to show symptoms of gradual decline. A lad of great promise—intellectual, gentle, unselfish—the thought of losing him was agony to the father. The physicians recommended change of climate, certain German mineral waters, and arrangements were immediately made for carrying this advice into effect. The Rector intended leaving Robert behind, but Walter pleaded so urgently to have his cousin with him, that he had not the heart to refuse, especially as the medical treatment was considered advantageous for the young baronet also, and accordingly the whole family went abroad.

Removed from the damp, depressing influences of an English winter, Walter recovered health and strength in a wonderful manner; and the happy father returned home in six months, leaving the two young men to study at Städtlein, under the care of an eminent physician. For a year or two all seemed

to progress favourably, but the deceitful disease continued its unseen ravages, and at length, developed by a cold which had settled on the lungs, made rapid strides. France and Italy were tried in vain. Walter became the wreck we have seen—his only desire was to be taken back to die in the old home, but to this as yet the Rector would not consent: “while there was life there was hope.” At this point, we again take up the thread of our story.

The evening of the day on which we first met them found the travellers comfortably settled in their hotel, in a little town half-way to L——. Dinner was just over, and they were resting from the fatigues of the journey. The Rector sat by himself at a small table near the stove, enjoying its grateful warmth, and luxuriating in the *Times*, from which, by some mismanagement, he had been debarred for several days. Walter’s couch was wheeled to the window, where he lay silently noting the radiant tints of the western sky, still glowing with the recent sunset, his hand clasped in that of his sister, who occupied a low chair by his side. His countenance no longer bore the deadly pallor of excitement; his large dark eyes beamed with quiet happiness, and a smile played about his lips; but as his sister looked lovingly at him from time to time, the increased spirituality of his appearance struck her with a chill foreboding. So they sat together in the darkening twilight—these two, bound together by a

tie stronger than that which usually unites brother and sister, conscious only of each other's nearness, rendered doubly precious by the hovering shadow whose dread reality was so soon to interpose between them.

"How dark it has become!" said Mr. Chesney, looking up from his paper, "and how cold! A good, roaring English fire would be a sight to gladden one's heart on a chilly evening like this,—eh, Walter?"

"That it would, father. It is one of the home-sights I have most longed for. When you write Marsden, Alice," he added, addressing his sister, "tell her to be sure and have a famous fire in my room the night of our arrival. Even if it should be July before we return, I have promised myself that pleasure. The very thought of the great chimney piled up with faggots from the old oak that was blown down by the last storm—blazing, crackling, sending out a merry light to dance in every nook and cranny—seems to give me new life!"

"Then you are resolved to go home, Walter?" said the Rector, with a sad, half-reproachful glance at his son.

"Dear father, we have led this gipsy life long enough! It is very trying for Alice and you, and it is doing me no good. I cannot tell you how my heart yearns to see the old place, and the old faces."

"Well, say no more, my boy, it shall be as you wish," and the Rector groaned.

They again relapsed into silence, which was broken by the sound of some one ascending the carpetless stairs, not after the fashion of ordinary mortals, but by upward leaps of three or four steps at a time.

"Robert!" exclaimed Walter, with the quick perception of an invalid whose ear has been sharpened by sleepless nights of watching for the morning.

"Impossible!" said Mr. Chesney, "he would never be so heedless," and for a moment it seemed as though he were right, for the footsteps passed their door into an adjoining apartment.

"I am sure it is Robert, no one else comes upstairs in that style," continued Walter; and hardly had the words escaped his lips, when a familiar rattat at the door was followed by the introduction of a curly head and a merry face, the limbs and body appertaining to which speedily presented themselves, the whole taking the form of a tall, slender youth, apparently about nineteen, of extremely prepossessing appearance, who advanced into the room with an air of mingled effrontery and hesitation, as if he were not quite sure of his welcome.

"Right at last!" he exclaimed; "this is the third room I have broken into in search of you. How are you, dear old boy?"

"Who could have expected to see you here, Mr. Truant?" said Alice, as she returned her cousin's

hasty greeting; while Walter's sunken eye lit up with pleasure. By this time Mr. Chesney had recovered from his surprise.

"What does this mean, Robert?" he said, sternly.

Robert started, he had not perceived his uncle: "Simply this, sir,—the temptation to see Walter was too strong for me. I knew you were to remain here overnight. After you are settled at L——, I shall not meet any of you again for months."

"That is no sufficient excuse. To come here in this sudden way, after your noisy leave-taking yesterday, and excite your cousin again, shows a great want of consideration."

"Don't be angry on my account, father," interposed Walter, gently, "I am only too happy to have him with me for a little."

"I don't think I should have come at all, if I had not had a special object," pursued Robert, somewhat crestfallen at his reception; "yesterday I saw a capital contrivance for lessening the motion of a carriage to an invalid. The thought of Walter struck me at once, and I came off with it directly, that he might have the benefit of it during the rest of the journey; otherwise I should have waited for your permission."

Walter pressed his cousin's hand gratefully, but Mr. Chesney was too much disturbed by his sudden arrival to look upon anything in a favourable light.

"Don't attempt to palliate your conduct," he said, severely; "this is another instance of your fatal impulsiveness. You see an article in a shop window; instead of sending it on by rail, as you might easily have done, nothing will content you but bringing it here yourself, without the slightest regard to the effect upon your cousin, or to my express desire that you should not leave town again before vacation."

Walter lay with closed eyes, feeling that his father's irritation was infinitely more hurtful to him than the presence of his young cousin, for whom he had a strong affection, and Robert was only prevented from making a hasty reply by Alice, who directed his attention to the invalid. Mr. Chesney saw the gesture, and probably felt that he had gone too far; for he rang the bell, and ordered a fire to be lit in another room, whither he betook himself with his papers, after cautioning Robert against over-exciting Walter.

"How abominably my uncle treats me!" burst forth the former, as soon as they were alone; "he can see no good in me. Everything I do is sure to be blamed."

"My dear boy," said Walter, "you can't expect my father to praise you for flying in the face of his wishes."

"His wishes are not reasonable, Walter; no fellow of my age has so little freedom as I. One cannot remain in leading-strings all one's life."

"There is no end to be gained by running your head against a stone wall, Robert. When my father says a thing, he means it, and that you ought to have discovered by this time. As to leading-strings, the best way to escape from them is to submit patiently for the short time remaining. You know very well that, if you aggravate my father, you will have three years tacked on to your minority—he has power to do it."

"That cursed will!" said Robert, clenching his fist. "I beg your pardon, Alice, but it really is enough to make one's blood boil. I am morally certain that, do what I may, my uncle will find some pretext for keeping me a minor as long as possible; he no more understands my thoughts and feelings than I do those of—Ponto there," concluded Robert, for want of a better illustration.

Walter smiled: "Dear Robert, don't let us get on that theme again. You know I feel for you, and regret most deeply that there should be this want of sympathy between the Rector and you. Still, he is my father, and a good, kind father he has been to me, and would have been equally so to you, had you allowed him. It is your duty, as well as your interest, to study him a little more than you do."

"It is all very well for you, Walter. You have always been a quiet, steady-going fellow, and you can't realize how difficult it is for me, with my hot temper, to meet your father's icy manner and looks—it raises the devil in me. Shut your ears,

Alice! I don't often have the chance of a talk with Walter."

"My poor Robert," said the sick youth, playing among his cousin's hair with his wasted fingers, "there will not be many more opportunities for us to talk together."

"Dear Walter, you are not worse?—you cannot tell what those famous baths are going to do for you. You know you took leave of us all two years ago; and here you are still."

Walter shook his head: "It would make it much easier for me to go, Robert, if I had your promise that you would try to take my place, and be a son to my father."

"Walter, there is nothing in the world I would not do to please you, but this, I fear, is beyond my power. Where is the use of promising what I can't perform?"

"Think of our motto, dear Robert; what you *will*, you can easily perform. A little attention to my father's wishes, and an evident desire to please him, would go a great way. He is not the harsh man you take him for—that I have found in my illness, I give you my word. The worst that can be said of him is, that he has a little too much of the Martinet in his composition, and all your opposition won't alter that. Besides, he is an old man now, and has had many trials."

Robert still remained obdurate. "You had a

specimen of him to-night. I *did* expect that he would have been pleased with that machine; but you heard what he said about it: nothing but impulsiveness on my part had prompted me to purchase it; such considerations as love or care for you never entered my thoughts—oh, no! I don't want to be thanked, but I do not like to be so misunderstood." (Poor Robert! you have yet to learn that in nine cases out of ten throughout life your motives will be misunderstood, and your intentions misinterpreted.)

"There you go, jumping at conclusions again, Robert," said Walter. "It was your quitting your post without leave that angered my father, not the buying of the machine; no doubt he appreciates your thoughtfulness as much as I do. But," he continued, raising himself on his couch, "don't let us talk of this any longer. Will you promise me what I asked of you, dear Robert?—it is the last request I shall ever make you."

"I will, Walter, I will; there's my hand on it," responded Robert, his moodiness vanquished by his cousin's earnestness. "I'll do my best to follow in your steps, however my uncle may receive it. But oh, Walter," he added, as the struggling moonbeams playing on the sick youth's countenance revealed the same ethereal expression that had alarmed Alice, and now carried conviction even to the unthinking lad, "if it should be true—if you

are indeed going to leave us, what will become of me? How shall I live without *you*, who have been father, brother—everything to me?"

"You have promised to look upon *my* father as *yours*," replied Walter cheerfully; "and then, here is Alice, who will be more to you than I have ever been."

"Alice knows nothing of our world, and the many things a young fellow has to make head against. Some day, perhaps, she will hear queer stories about me, and she will believe them all, and take my uncle's view in everything."

"As she has always done!" said Alice, smiling; "nay, Robert, you know me better."

The glance with which Robert replied to this, revealing a depth of feeling that indicated something more than mere cousinly affection, needed no words to render it eloquent.

"Come, Alice," said Walter, "tell Robert about our adventure; we had almost forgotten it; and don't let us be looking melancholy when my father comes in."

Robert listened with interest to Alice's animated description of the peril they had so narrowly escaped, and, when she came to Arnold's disclosure of his profession, burst out laughing: "By Jove! I'd give something to have seen my uncle's face!"

"No, you would not, if you had been in my

place," said Alice gravely; "I only trust the poor young man was not hurt by it."

"I shall certainly make this Müller's acquaintance—it was a gallant action. And besides, anybody my uncle does not like is sure to turn out one of my prime favourites, a very prince of good fellows."

"Papa seemed to take to him at first."

"And then threw him overboard on discovering that he was 'only a fiddler,' eh?—I hate such cold-bloodedness! I can tell you that musicians in Germany have a position very different from that which they *enjoy* in England."

"That may be," said Mr. Chesney, who entered at the moment; "but we are English, not German; and I desire you, Robert, to make no effort to trace this young man. Unfortunately, he has your address, and no doubt will apply to you whenever he finds it to his advantage to do so."

"I don't think he will, papa. He did not look like one accustomed to ask many favours," said Alice hastily, and stopped.

"Leave me to judge of this matter, Alice. I presume my knowledge of the world is a little more extensive than yours," replied her father coldly. "Do not make a prince in disguise out of this strolling player."

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of John, bearing a massive prayer-book, preceded by

a footman with two tall silver candlesticks, and followed by the somewhat numerous retinue which Mr. Chesney's dignity required for its support on the Continent. The Rector read the Evening Service in the same sonorous voice that echoed through the aisles of Ilmington church, and then the party separated for the night, but not before Robert had extracted from his cousin Alice a minute description of the "strolling player," against whom he had been warned.

CHAPTER V.

THE DIRECTOR AND HIS HOUSEHOLD.

BEFORE many days had elapsed, Arnold was as much at home in the Director's house as though he had been domesticated there for months. His duties as secretary were certainly not heavy, occupying for the most part merely an hour or two in the morning; and this came to be regarded by him as the pleasantest part of the day, since it necessarily brought him into direct intercourse with the Kapellmeister, whom, as time went on, he regarded with increasing esteem and veneration.

Gottlob Bergmann was no ordinary man. Apart from his musical genius (which deservedly gave him a very high place in the world of art), his keen, vigorous mind—its faculties disciplined by severe intellectual culture, and sharpened by long observation of men—would have ensured his success in any profession to which he had devoted himself. When we add to this, the inherent charm of an earnest, unselfish nature—a charm possessed by the Director in a high degree—we can hardly wonder at the influence, almost unbounded, which he exercised,

not over Arnold alone, but over every impressionable mind with which he came in contact. While practising to its fullest extent the advice he had given our hero on the evening of his arrival, regarding the "creation of a world of his own"—while living a life of constant effort, of ceaseless striving after that ideal of truth and beauty than which nothing lower could satisfy his artistic sense—he yet found time to discharge honourably his multifarious public duties, to lend a hand to many a struggling fellow-worker, and to perform many an act of quiet, unostentatious kindness, known only to its recipient, or to those constantly about him. In short, the Director's character is, perhaps, best expressed by the word *loveable*. Loveable he was in the best and highest sense, and Arnold looked up to him with all the enthusiasm of a young, ardent nature which has found for the first time one whom it can regard as a friend and guide. The Director repaid this generous confidence with interest; for apart from his natural liking for the son of his old friend, he had very soon perceived in the young man the stuff out of which the real artist is made.

From the first day he stood in high favour with Fräulein Martha, who never could say enough in his praise. The good lady was the kindest, simplest being in the world; although there were not wanting those who hinted that the accident which had scarred her face in the way we have seen, had also left her

slightly confused in the cerebral regions. This calumny can be very well traced, however, to a certain feminine clique for which Städtlein is famous, and was doubtless promulgated as a species of revenge for her presuming to hold herself aloof from its afternoon conclaves, summoned ostensibly for the purpose of social work—in reality, of course, for that of dissecting the reputation of every one known to the operators.

If Fräulein Martha *had* a failing, it arose out of her extreme desire to do her duty by the brother over whose household she presided, and to this end, we regret to say, she kept herself and all around her in a chronic state of "worry." In vain did the Director point out to her the very moderate scale on which his domestic arrangements were organized—the notion of the responsibility hanging over her, haunted aunt Martha as the ghost did Hamlet, urging her on to achievements beyond her strength. She was never happy except when trotting about between the linen-chests and the cellars, thence from store-room to kitchen, pouncing upon the servants at all hours, and, in her gentle, helpless way giving them the most contradictory orders until she had succeeded in working up these bewildered and long-suffering individuals to the highest pitch of exasperation, when the good soul would retire to some other field of activity, and sigh softly to herself over the

difficulties incident to the direction of "a large establishment." Into some of these she lost no time in initiating Arnold, and was greatly comforted and strengthened by the sensible advice he tendered.

"There is some satisfaction in consulting Arnold," she would observe to Mala, whose age rendered her in the estimation of her aunt a somewhat unsuitable confidante. "*He* does not think the whole matter settled with a 'Do take things more easily!' like your poor papa, my dear. Arnold can appreciate a difficulty, and help one out of it."

And the unlucky youth found himself gradually raised to the post of prime minister and counsellor-in-chief regarding all the Fräulein's sublunary anxieties—from the curing of the winter hams to the fitting-up of the new drawing-room; to his own secret, half-comic annoyance, and the Director's intense amusement.

"What a capital house-father you will make one of these days, Arnold!" he would say with a laugh. "I fear your wife may consider your accurate knowledge of prices a little superfluous!"

"Now don't spoil Arnold; he is my only comfort," Fräulein Martha would reply, and forthwith resume the discussion of the household mystery which the Director's inconsiderateness had interrupted, in blissful ignorance of the despairing grimaces that had just been exchanged between her 'comfort' and his aide-de-camp Mala.

And the latter coy, fascinating little damsel—what came of the daily intercourse with her? We can hardly tell.

“What!” exclaims the reader, “are you not bound to know every detail of the story you profess to relate?”

Undoubtedly! but in this instance our testimony would be so directly opposed to that of our hero, that we are loth to give it. If we might express our free opinion on the matter, we would say, that in the case of Arnold and Mala there had been “love at first sight” on the part of the former. In this, however, we are flatly contradicted by Arnold, who, during the first year of his sojourn at Städtlein, asserted over and over again to himself (and therefore to us, his unseen auditor) that, since he—a penniless student—had no *right* to love the daughter of the Director, as a logical consequence no such feeling existed in his breast! If it were not for this incontrovertible argument, we might, perhaps, be able to prove our case, by asking, firstly—since he had no special interest in Mala—whence that sense of disappointment, if, on going into the study of a morning, nothing but the oriental dressing-gown was to be seen, no white-robed figure standing by the cabinet of curiosities, trying in vain to reduce that chaos to order? Why that anxious glance at the deep window-recess, that quickening of the pulse when behind the lace drapery a curly head

could be perceived bending over a piece of embroidery? And secondly—Why that fierce dislike to the very pretty and well-sounding name, *Lucien*, the mere mention of which, at this period of our hero's career, was sufficient to rouse in him an insane desire to challenge some one to mortal combat?

As we must content ourselves with Arnold's own answer to these questions, we discover that it was the Director alone who exercised the spell over him, who made existence a brighter thing than he had ever before conceived it to be; that the sound of a ringing laugh and the sight of a sweet face had nothing whatever to do with the charm of Städtlein; and that he disliked the name of Lucien for the very cogent reason that everybody else, the aunt and Mala excepted, appeared to do the same.

We may be pardoned for hinting that Arnold, although arrived at the mature age of two-and-twenty, had not acquired the habit of analysing his own feelings very minutely. He knew that he was happy, and for a time this was sufficient; he cared not to inquire too scrupulously into its cause.

Herr Bergmann had not married till late in life, and his happiness had been of short duration, for his wife died at the age of nineteen, in giving birth to Mala. The blow was heavy at the time, but a casual observer might have imagined that its effects were not lasting. Those who knew the Director in-

tunately could have told a different story; his genial, amiable disposition did not allow him to obtrude his sorrow long on the notice of others; but he was never afterwards quite the same man. The anniversary of his wife's death was observed by him as a sacred day, and he carried the sense of his bereavement with him to the grave. On Mala, the child of his old age, was concentrated the wealth of affection which, but for her, might have gradually frozen up within him. She was his all, his treasure, the object for which he lived, more to him even than his art—and if it had been possible to spoil that sweet, unselfish nature, his excessive indulgence would long ago have effected it; for every wish, every whim of hers was humoured.

On one subject alone did he ever turn a deaf ear to her entreaties, and that was her education, or rather her non-education. He had conceived a notion that the early death of his wife, a highly-cultivated woman, had been accelerated by the effects of over-study, and as Mala inherited her mother's fragile constitution, he resolved that she should run no such risk. In all kinds of feminine handiwork she was, like most German girls, an adept, a set of knitting-needles having been given her together with her first doll; she could read and write; but studies involving brainwork the Director resolutely forbade. Entirely ignorant of any language except her own; profoundly versed in Schiller, from

whose dramas her sole knowledge of history had been derived ; with a misty conception of the difference between latitude and longitude, and none at all of that between vulgar and decimal fractions ; and a well-grounded belief that Timbuctoo at some remote period had been the capital of Japan (might be now, for aught she knew to the contrary), Mala at sixteen would have horrified a zealous schoolmistress. Her acquaintance with music was naturally the one oasis in her desert of ignorance, and even this had been gained in a half-playful way, since the Director would entrust the task of instruction to none but himself ; and, in accordance with his peculiar views, the steps by which Mala was to climb Parnassus were made very easy and very gentle indeed. She bade fair to possess like her mother a most uncommon voice, and Herr Bergmann's friends were loud in their expressions of astonishment that he did not allow her to attend the classes of the Conservatorium — nay, the committee had even conveyed to him an official hint to the effect that, " his refusal to place his daughter in the Academy over which he himself presided might appear curious in the eyes of the world."

Herr Bergmann did not condescend to notice this innuendo, but his objection to comply with the advice so liberally tendered on all sides may be explained by a remark made to Wallraf : " The Conservatorium is necessarily a public institution, open to all comers,

and—I will not have the dew brushed from my violet too soon.” So the violet bloomed out quietly, nestling in its sheltering home, as a violet should, and even those who had been most ready to censure the Director’s mode of education could not but acknowledge that “Fräulein Bergmann was a sweet, modest girl;” and although the members of the clique vented their special wonder that anything good should come out of Fräulein Martha’s hands, Mala herself knew how much she owed to that good lady’s gentle care, for the aunt, with all her peculiarities, was essentially a lady at heart.

Notwithstanding, as time went on, poor Mala began wofully to feel the deficiencies engendered by her father’s tenderness, and many were the consultations she and Arnold held together on the point. On one occasion, about three months after he came to the house, she evinced a strong desire to learn French, and asked him whether he could assist her. Arnold feared he was not sufficiently strong in the subject himself: “I get on well enough in conversation, you know, Mala,” he said, “but teaching is another affair. I should hardly like to inoculate you with my accent. If it had been Latin or Greek now, or English, I might have assisted you.”

“English is very hard, is it not?” said Mala, doubtfully; “and besides, I do so want to know French.”

It was finally settled that Mala should attack her

father about it, and as she knew from experience how difficult he was to move, Arnold promised to act as second, and uphold her request by every argument in his power. Accordingly that very evening she opened fire. They were all sitting in the garden after supper—Wallraf there as usual; he was more in the Director's house than in his own.

"Papa," she began, gradually approaching the point, like a wary diplomatist, "should you like to see a French paper? Lucien sent me one the other day from Paris."

"What is it? the *Follet*? or the *Magasin des Modes*?"

"Oh no, papa! nothing about dress. It has a very long name; I don't know what it means, but Lucien says it contains a very good critique on your last cantata, which he says I ought to read. Dear father, may I learn French?"

"Certainly not for the purpose of reading critiques on my works. You can see plenty of them in German much more to the point."

"This is a very well-written article, you really ought to look at it," said Arnold, faithful to his promise; but the Director affected not to hear him.

"But I have other reasons, papa, for desiring to know French," pursued Mala.

"Have you though?"

"Certainly!—I am getting very old."

"Pray lend me your glasses, aunt Martha, that I may see this very old woman!"

"Papa, do be serious! Arnold thinks I ought to know French;—don't you, Arnold? His sister is not much older than I, and she speaks it as well as German. So do all the girls, except me. You cannot think how ashamed I felt the other evening at Frau Stein's. Some foreign ladies were there, and the whole conversation was in French. Everybody joined in it but me, and I sat the whole time by myself in a corner."

"That was a wholesome lesson for you, Mala—salutary mortification of the flesh," said her father, laughing; while Wallraf added, in his cynical way, "When was not vanity at the bottom of a woman's thirst for knowledge?"

Mala turned upon him with a flash of indignation. "Herr von Wallraf," she said, with the freedom of a spoilt child, "you know nothing whatever about women, so please let us alone. Papa, don't say 'No.'"

"But I *do* say 'No!' Learn to be a good housewife, and to make potato-salad like your aunt's. That is far more useful than the power to chatter a little bad French."

"Not necessarily bad, papa! I should work very hard if you would allow me to have a few lessons."

"No, no, Mala; it cannot be. Don't tease me any longer, there's a good girl! Have you finished that volume of Grimm I bought for you the other day?"

"Fairy tales!" exclaimed the aggrieved Mala, fairly bursting into tears, "anybody would imagine I was six instead of sixteen!"

Wallraf fled from the spot, muttering some indistinct comparison between "women" and "crocodiles;" and the Director, who had never before believed his daughter in earnest, was excessively perplexed. In his eyes she was still the little Mala of ten years ago, whose greatest delight had consisted in chocolate and sugar candy.

"Hey! hey! my little one crying!" he exclaimed, drawing her to him. "Arnold, what is it all about? This is some nonsense you have been putting into her head!"

"Not I, sir. Mala consulted me with regard to her learning French, and I advised her to apply to you, as I had no doubt you would accede to her wish."

"Then you were quite mistaken. I don't choose that Mala shall worry her little head with any such absurdity. Come, Mala, look up, my pet!—put away those foolish tears."

But Mala was not to be consoled; breaking away from him, she rushed into the house, saying, "Oh! papa, papa, *when* will you learn that I cannot be a child all my life!" leaving her father more than ever mystified, and very much inclined to visit his displeasure on Arnold as the author of the mischief.

In the end, the young lady gained her point by

persuading aunt Martha to engage a French maid, in lieu of one recently dismissed ; and although the new importation finished a short term of service by taking the "leave" supposed to be habitual to her compatriots, and together with it a pair of massive gold earrings, inherited by aunt Martha from her grandmother, Mala's equanimity was not much disturbed ; for had she not acquired a knowledge of the Gallic tongue, and consequently the power to read the charming *novelettes* sent her at frequent intervals by an individual whose initials were "L. D." ?

We must not forget to mention an important member of the household, Herr Schmidt, or, as he was affectionately known in the family, *the Alte* (a title dignified by the aunt on great occasions by the prefix *Herr*) — the same old gentleman who had comported himself so oddly on the evening of Arnold's arrival. His declining years had found an asylum in the house of his former pupil, who did not allow the lapse of time to deaden the sense of past obligation, but bore, like a son, with the old man's eccentricities. Beyond meeting him every day at table, where he uniformly behaved in the same way, Arnold had seen nothing of him, and was therefore not a little surprised one afternoon, on returning from a walk, to find him comfortably ensconced in his room, fiddling away to himself on an old violin, that looked as much the worse for wear as its

owner, but out of which he nevertheless contrived to draw a surprising volume of tone. He stopped when Arnold entered, and exclaimed peevishly :

“So you have come at last! Why have you kept me so long waiting?”

Thinking that the old gentleman had possibly lost his few remaining wits, Arnold replied that he had not expected the honour of a visit from him.

“Did you not say last night, that you wished you had some one to play your violin accompaniments for you?” said the Alte, testily.

Arnold suddenly recollected having expressed some such desire the preceding evening at supper, whereupon the Alte had turned round and given him a peculiar look, doubtless (if he had known how to interpret it) making the appointment for the next day.

“You know very well,” pursued the old man in an aggrieved tone, “that no one in the house plays the violin but me!—but if you don’t want me, I’ll go,” and he replaced his instrument in its case, and prepared to hobble from the room.

“No, no, my dear sir!” said Arnold, placing his back against the door—(he had nothing very pressing in hand, and thought he might as well humour the old man)—“I shall be most happy if you will do me the favour of accompanying me. See! here is Mozart waiting for us,” and he placed a sonata for piano and violin on the desk, and began to play

the first few bars. The Alte was not proof against this; he took out the violin again, his hand quivering with eagerness, his dim eyes sparkling, and in a few moments the sonata was in full swing—the violin part played with a vigour and fire irresistibly communicated to the pianist, who felt himself compelled, out of simple deference to his companion, to abandon the nonchalant air with which he had commenced. At the end of the first movement, Arnold looked round; he could hardly believe his eyes—a new spirit seemed to have gained possession of the old man; his absent, vacant expression was gone; his countenance beamed with animation and energy. They played together for about an hour, when Arnold was obliged reluctantly to stop, having to attend the Director. The light faded from the Alte's eyes as he shut up his instrument.

"Thou art a good lad to humour an old man so," he said in a quavering voice; "Lucien would not do it—but Lucien was the loser!—yes! Lucien was the loser! I am not fit for much now; but in my day I have played with some of our greatest men—ay! with Hummel, and Mendelssohn, and Moscheles. I can tell thee a secret or two!" he added, with a mysterious look, and slowly took himself out of the room. When Arnold met him again at supper, the Alte took not the slightest notice of him, but was observed to shake his head more vehemently than ever, and so as completely to

baffle the good aunt's efforts to find out its significance.

The Director was not a little surprised when Arnold informed him of this occurrence: "Strange!" he said, "to my certain knowledge he has not played for years. After the death of a son to whom he was much attached, he gave it up, and no persuasion could induce him to touch his instrument. In his time he was a famous violinist, and if his memory were better, he could give you many useful hints."

The Alte's memory grew better; under the influence of the affection he had conceived for Arnold, he seemed to renew his youth, and to find a never-failing delight in initiating the young student into all the classical traditions wherewith his old brains were stored. Never did an afternoon pass without his paying a visit to Arnold's apartment, and the friendship, so curiously begun, became a source of real pleasure to both.

Thus Arnold found a home in the old house by the river, a father in the Director, and—shall we say a *sister*? in Mala. One circumstance alone disturbed his peace, and rubbed the gilt from his happiness. This was the extraordinary and unaccountable behaviour of Wallraf, who for some reason seemed to have taken a dislike to him.

At first, Arnold attributed it to faults on his own side. Could it be possible that the kindness of his new friends had produced in him some rising

egotism, which provoked Wallraf into irritation ? He could not answer for himself, although on careful retrospect nothing appeared to justify the supposition ; but his anxiety to win Wallraf's regard (or rather to recover the good opinion he had enjoyed at the commencement of their intercourse), was stronger than his dislike to the caustic remarks that fell from the lips of the cynic. He accordingly resolved to be for the future upon his guard ; he refrained from the slightest observation that might be deemed presumptuous ; became reserved in his manner ; and endeavoured to bear without wincing the shafts of Wallraf's wit.

In vain ! the more he tried to conciliate Wallraf, the greater was that gentleman's pleasure in the operation popularly known as "stroking the wrong way." Did Arnold so far forget his determination as to launch forth into enthusiastic laudation of any object, Wallraf would observe that, "he had hitherto supposed the gushing age to be limited to sweet sixteen, but that Arnold's spontaneity was excessively refreshing ;" or he would remind him that "the most elementary rule for one who aspired to be an artist was, never to allow his feelings to carry him *hors de soi*."

On the other hand, if Arnold would not suffer himself to be drawn into conversation, he would find some means of holding him up to the general ridicule, by solemnly affecting to defer to his opinion, with a

preface such as: "the wise man hath two ears and but one tongue; here is our Socrates with no tongue at all!" or: "In our society Herr Müller is the only silent member; he is to us what the horned owl was in the Conclave of Fowls. Speak, O most Sage! and enlighten our darkness!"

Such speeches as these, delivered in Wallraf's sardonic way in the midst of a large, general company, were most galling to Arnold's sensitiveness. Others spoke their minds with freedom, criticised Wallraf to his face, or made themselves conspicuous by discussing subjects they did not comprehend; but Wallraf either heard their remarks with indifference, or drew them out—as it seemed to Arnold, for his own amusement—in a sufficiently good humoured way, very different from the biting sarcasm reserved for our luckless hero.

Matters at length came to such a pass that Arnold felt he must either keep himself entirely aloof, or run the risk of wounding the Director by an open rupture with Wallraf. Preferring the former alternative, he shut himself up in his own room, resisting all Mala's entreaties that he would join the family circle. Even here, however, he was not safe. One evening he sat upstairs by himself as usual, listening to the laughter that floated in through the open window from the garden, where Mala was the centre of a group of merry young people. Inwardly chafing under the perse-

cution that condemned him thus to solitary imprisonment, he took refuge with his piano, and poured out all his troubles to that wordless but eloquent confidant. Suddenly a vigorous, decided step coming along the passage struck upon his ear. He paused, so did the intruder, and after a little Arnold resumed, thinking that it must be one of the servants who had turned into another room. Absorbed in his own fancies he had completely forgotten the occurrence, when the door was abruptly opened, a sallow face thrust in, and immediately withdrawn. Choking with rage Arnold rushed into the corridor—how dare Wallraf invade his privacy?—but the footsteps were already descending the stairs, and there was no remedy but to pocket the affront.

Naturally in the little household this state of affairs could not escape observation. Mala took Arnold's part openly against Wallraf (she was the only one who dared use the liberty), and the Alte was heard to mutter, that "if Gottlob did not put down that Icicle (a name he had applied to the pianist) he himself would tell him a bit of his mind." At length the pent-up feelings found an outlet.

One day, Arnold was hastily summoned to the study.

"Arnold," said the Director (standing with his back to him), in the tone of one who knows that what he is about to say will be unpalatable to the hearer, "I want you to go round to Wallraf's for me."

Arnold stood for a moment. "To Herr von Wallraf's!—cannot Fritz take the message?"

"I cannot send a servant. If Wallraf is not at home, he must be found at once, as there is no time to lose." Still Arnold lingered, hesitating between his extreme dislike to the task, and the impossibility of escaping it.

"If I had not an engagement at four o'clock," continued Herr Bergmann, "I would go myself, since you do not like to beard the lion in his den."

Arnold shrugged his shoulders. "I wish, dear Director, you had asked me to put my hand in the fire—I'd as lief do one as the other."

The Director gave him full instructions regarding the affair on hand, and he set off on his disagreeable mission. Wallraf occupied a handsome suite of apartments in the best quarter of the town. Arnold was shown into a room whose elegant appointments formed a strong contrast to the simplicity of Herr Bergmann's house. Wallraf was at his desk; he looked up as Arnold entered, and said, "Be good enough to wait a little, this letter must be sent off at once."

"Herr Bergmann said it was essential you should hear what I have to tell, without delay," observed Arnold, annoyed by his manner; but Wallraf went on writing.

"He treats me like a lacquey!" thought Arnold,

his bosom swelling, as he strode to the window, and stood there with the most indifferent, not to say defiant, air he could assume. Quarter of an hour passed; half an hour: still Wallraf's rapid pen traversed the pages. At last the letter was finished, sealed, and entrusted to a servant, with orders to post it immediately.

"Now, young sir, what has the Kapellmeister to say?"

Arnold delivered his message in as few words as possible, and with a *hauteur* fully equal to Wallraf's.

"The devil!" exclaimed the latter, springing up as he concluded, "why did you not tell me that before?"

"Why would you not listen?" retorted Arnold. Wallraf rang the bell furiously, and demanded the letter he had just sent off. Too late; it was gone. He wrote another; despatched it after the first, and then sat down to pen a few lines to Herr Bergmann.

"I brought a *verbal* message," thought Arnold, "why must he write in reply?"

Suddenly Wallraf stopped. "How do you like Städtlein, Herr Müller?" he said, nonchalantly.

"Do you care to know?" returned Arnold, fiercely.

"Certainly, or I should not have asked the question!" and Wallraf threw the note lightly across the table. "No doubt you have a most enviable sinecure; one hour's work in the day will not

exhaust you, and Director Bergmann is delightfully simple, is he not ?”

Arnold stood rooted to the spot; it seemed to him as though every drop of blood in his body rushed to his face.

“Herr von Wallraf,” he began, with all the calmness he could muster, “you mean to imply that I am in the Director’s house under false pretences—that I abuse what you are pleased to call his *simplicity* ?”

Wallraf did not answer; he lounged back in his chair; his eyes, intently fixed on Arnold, wore that look of expectation with which men await what promises to be a curious scene. Arnold read confirmation in them—in his contemptuous attitude. Beside himself with fury, he dashed the letter on the table, strode from the room, tore down stairs like a whirlwind, and before he knew what he was about, found himself in the street. Instinctively taking the direction opposite to that in which Herr Bergmann’s house lay, he forced his way through the crowded streets, driving everything before him with a recklessness that made people turn to look after him, and shake their heads as though all were not right with the young man—nor did he pause till he found himself on the promenade by the river.

As he expected, not a soul was in sight, the fashionable hour not having yet arrived; and here he paced in a tumult of agitation that precluded any attempt

at calm thought, until the solitariness of the place and the cool breeze from the river had done their work and soothed his fever. He then sat down on a bench to reflect on his plan of action.

Wallraf's remark had lifted the veil from what had been a mystery to him; no wonder that he regarded him with contempt! Arnold felt degraded in his own eyes; his soul revolted from himself. He had been asleep in the belief that he was earning for himself an honourable livelihood; and now awoke to discover that he was—what?—a dependant! an object of charity! indebted to the Director's good-nature for his daily bread; and Arnold ground his teeth with mortification. "Fool that I have been not to realize it before!" he muttered. "I ought to have known, that the little I do for Herr Bergmann is no return for what he lavishes on me," and a new element of bitterness mingled with his grief, as he reflected that the Director must have been aware all along of what people thought of him. Instead of Wallraf being his enemy, as he fancied, he had only been more candid than the rest; for, clearly, everybody must regard him as a sneaking fellow to take advantage of the Director's large-heartedness in the way he had done. He must leave Städtlein at once; that was his only course—the only means by which he could ever recover his self-respect. *Leave Städtlein!* The image of Mala rose up vividly before him, as she had said to him the

preceding evening, "Dear Arnold, won't you join us in the garden? I miss you so much!" "Ah! Mala, will you miss me one half as much as I shall you?" thought the poor lad, and his eyes filled. Then there crowded on his memory the recollection of the Director, with his never-varying kindness, and the prospect of his future career, that but a few hours before had spread itself out so brightly before him—and he groaned aloud. The invasion of a crowd of gaily-dressed people roused him. Shrinking from observation like some guilty thing, he began his homeward walk, resolved that, cost what it might, the sacrifice should be made; he would have an explanation with the Director that very night, and leave the town next day.

When he reached home it was growing dark; dinner was already over, and he went straight to the study. There, to his surprise, he saw Wallraf, who nodded maliciously to him, saying, "You left the answer behind, so I brought it myself." Arnold took no notice of him; but going up to the Director, who was in his favourite place by the window, he said in a low voice: "When you are disengaged, Herr Director, may I have a few minutes with you—alone?"

"Certainly," returned Herr Bergmann; no less astonished by the request than by Arnold's appearance and manner: "nothing wrong at home, I hope?—your mother?"

"They are all well," Arnold began; but his lip trembled, and he hastily left the room.

"Excuse me a moment, Wallraf," said the Director, following his secretary; "there is something unusual the matter with Arnold. I must inquire into it at once."

Overtaking the young man before he had gained his own room, he tapped him on the shoulder: "Come into the garden; we shall be less liable to interruption there." Arnold turned, and the two descended the stairs in silence.

The Director did not return to Wallraf in "a moment," nor in many moments. Long and earnestly they talked together, pacing the dark alleys till the pale moon sent its struggling rays through the heavy masses of shadow cast by the lime trees, and the falling stars shot brilliantly through the clear night air.

Herr Bergmann listened patiently to Arnold's story: Wallraf's taunt; his own conviction of its truth; and his resolution to quit Städtlein.

"I suspected Wallraf was at the bottom of this," he remarked, when Arnold had ended; "and no doubt that cursed manner of his irritated you more than his words."

"I am not irritated, dear Herr Director. I see that all he said is only too just. I wish I had known it sooner."

"That you might desert me the sooner? Listen,

Arnold. I shall tell you now of a plan that I intended to keep secret a little longer. Last year, and for several winters, I have suffered very much from asthma, as you know. The least exposure to damp is sufficient to confine me to the house for weeks. Of course, this materially affects the proper discharge of my duties in the town. At such times they are either wholly neglected, or performed first by one of my friends, then by another, as they can spare time. This, you will easily perceive, is not satisfactory, and I sent in my resignation to the committee. They would not accept it, however, for reasons best known to themselves, but suggested that I should have an assistant, who could act as deputy for me in case of my being laid aside by illness; and they promised to place this individual, whoever he might be, on the same footing with the other professors at the Conservatorium, although his duties were to consist mainly in what I have mentioned. Now, Arnold," continued the Director, "you see what I am driving at. When your letter arrived some months ago I was pleased with the tone of it, and selfish enough to think, 'Here is the very man I am in search of!' I knew you had received a thorough general education—trust my old friend Müller for that!—and I also knew that if you resembled your father we should get on admirably together. You came; and I now declare that I am entirely satisfied with you, and, if you have patience

to bear with an old man, mean to propose you to the committee as my lieutenant."

"Herr Director," cried Arnold, in a voice hoarse with conflicting emotions, "the patience is all on your side; but I am not fit for a position such as you describe; all I know—and that is very little—I owe to you."

"Leave me to judge of your fitness, my boy; depend on it, for the credit of my own sagacity, I will not choose an unworthy representative. Now are you satisfied?"

"This does not lessen the truth of Wallraf's remark," began Arnold with hesitation. "In the meantime, dear Herr Bergmann, I am doing nothing; I am of no service to you."

"You are of the greatest possible service to me, Arnold! True, I never before indulged in the luxury of a secretary; but if you were to leave me now, I should miss you sorely. Besides, do you imagine that an assistant such as I desire can be picked up in the street? or formed at a moment's notice out of a raw youth from the music-school? Do not think, dear Arnold, that the training I am now giving you is intended solely and entirely for your own benefit."

Arnold felt the kindly delicacy that lay beneath this egotistical speech, but he could only press the Director's hand in silence.

"And now for Wallraf! He shall eat his words," said Herr Bergmann, with sudden energy.

"Dear Director," interposed Arnold, as a qualm of conscience came over him, lest the good feeling between the two old friends should suffer on his account, "do not say anything to Wallraf; I am perfectly satisfied."

"But I am not!" returned the Director, as he set off at a round pace towards the house, bristling with righteous indignation, the wonderful birds on his dressing-gown flapping their wings behind him in the wind.

In the meanwhile Wallraf had made up his mind that he would offer some explanation to Arnold. He was not a bad-hearted man, and the sight of our hero's agitation had caused him a pang of remorse. Like many a satirist, in giving the rein to his tongue he had not the remotest idea that his weapon penetrated so deeply—those directed against Arnold especially had always seemed to him to launch off without making the slightest incision—so little do we know the effect of our words!

"Wallraf," said the Director, abruptly, "this is your work! Here is Arnold determined to leave Städtlein on account of some remark you made to him. Now I have to request that you will either withdraw it, or qualify it in some way."

"Very good," replied Wallraf, coolly. "Arnold, be kind enough to repeat exactly what I said—that is, if your impetuosity allowed you to hear it accurately at the time, which I very much doubt."

"The exact words I cannot remember, Herr von Wallraf," said Arnold, stung again by his non-chalance; "but you distinctly implied that, by remaining here, I took advantage of the Director's kindness."

"Young man, I should like to have you in the witness-box, and put you through a thorough cross-examination," said Wallraf, darting one of his luminous flashes at him; "perhaps that would brighten your memory! What I said was this:—First, that you ought to be content in Städtlein; secondly, that one hour's work a day will kill no man; and thirdly, that Director Bergmann is a delightful old gentleman—all of which propositions I still maintain."

"Tut, tut!" said the Director, impatiently, "this is mere trifling. We all know you, Wallraf. You have wounded Arnold,—but I do not believe you did it intentionally. Make the only amends you can, and tell him that you had no serious meaning in what you said."

"Well, I admit that."

"Are you satisfied now, Arnold?"

"Not quite, Herr Director. Herr von Wallraf may have heard the same thing from others—that I—I, am only here on sufferance."

This time Wallraf addressed himself direct: "No, young Fire-eater! I give you my word, you stand very fairly in public esteem. But let me advise you

to moderate that appetite of yours. If you are to go on finding food for your choler in provocation as slight as I gave you to-day, it will soon burst from repletion."

"Arnold," said the Director hastily, "you had better join the ladies, aunt Martha is terribly concerned that you have had no supper;" and as Arnold left the room, he added, reproachfully, to Wallraf, "I verily believe you are possessed! What induced you to anger the lad?"

"The cockerel's crow is too loud!" said Wallraf, discontentedly.

"Nonsense! I love him like my own son; a more modest, unassuming lad there never was, until you began upon him. It is you who have developed his self-assertion, and you ought to be the last to complain of it."

The news of the tussle between the two soon became known to all the house—how, or through whose instrumentality, Arnold could not tell; but he had, at least, the satisfaction of perceiving that everybody took his part in the matter. The ladies especially, who had suffered from Wallraf's gibes on their sex, rejoiced that for once their champion had stood up for himself; and the Alte's indiscreet conduct all but fanned the smouldering ashes into flame. On the evening succeeding that memorable conversation, he startled the supper-table by a sudden burst of laughter, all the more inexplicable be-

cause there happened to be silence at the moment. By the help of sundry thumps on the spinal column from the alarmed Fritz, he recovered sufficiently to gasp, while he wiped the tears from his old eyes, "To think of the Fire-eater and the Icicle falling out ! But thou didst swallow him, Arnold !" poking his neighbour in the ribs, "thou didst swallow him. A delectable morsel he must have been this hot weather ! O Lord"—and he relapsed again.

"Be quiet !" said Arnold, with more vigour than politeness ; for Wallraf's eyes were flaming across the table to discover the cause of the old man's unwonted merriment.

CHAPTER VI.

AN UNEXPECTED RENCONTRE.

OF all days in the week, Sunday was to Arnold the brightest, since it brought with it the delight of escorting Mala to church. Aunt Martha was a Catholic. In accordance with the universal custom of German families, whose heads unfortunately differ with regard to religious belief, she and her sister had been brought up in the Roman faith; her brother, on the contrary, as a Protestant. Therefore, when the Director did not himself attend the service, to Arnold was committed the care of Mala.

Long years after, when he was a grey-headed man, Arnold never heard the discordant jangling of the old Städtlein bells without a sudden rush of memory back to the time when they had struck upon his ear as the sweetest of sweet sounds. What visions they conjured up of still, calm Sunday mornings, when the sunshine appeared to stream in more brilliantly than on ordinary days, the river to ripple more melodiously, the sky to burn with a deeper blue, the perfume-laden breeze stealing in from the rose—hedges to whisper unutterable things! What

pictures of the Director's sanctum, open for once to all comers—the tying-on of Mala's bonnet by aunt Martha's own hands, the tiresome waves of golden hair that *would* break over the fair brow, and could by no possibility be induced to keep within the decorous bounds of church-going propriety; the Director's affected *tut-tut-ing* and *pshaw-ing* over these and similar feminine anxieties, and the cigar-scented kiss with which, to Mala's ostensible horror, he finally rewarded them,—such occurrences, with many others equally insignificant, photographed themselves on Arnold's memory with a distinctness not to be obtained by more important affairs in after-life.

Then the walk to the town! How Arnold blessed the neglect of the civic authorities that afforded him a pretext for helping Mala over a broken place in the pavement,—how he hailed the indication of a disturbance among the crowd, that he might draw her closer to him for protection,—what an exquisite thrill did the touch of her little hand upon his arm send through his strong frame!—at such moments he felt himself a second Hercules, daring enough to face the world in her behalf.

What mattered it that, once within the sacred walls, they were separated—she on one side of the building, he on the other? Arnold came to the conclusion that this arrangement was decidedly preferable to their sitting together, although that, in its

own way, would have been Elysium. For, on those sultry mornings when the confined air of the old church, or the drawling voice of the preacher, produced an almost irresistible tendency to drowsiness—had he not the never-failing remedy of seeking a “sermon in stone,” more eloquent than the one which fell upon his ear, in that monument of ages, the elaborately carved pillar by the side of Mala’s chair? And, his eye once there, what harm was there in allowing it to rest upon the pure, sweet face beneath, whose beauty seemed spiritualized for the moment by the intensity of its devotion?

There is a period in the history of every one when life wears a totally different aspect from that dreary round of work, sorrow, and care—care, work, and sorrow—which too soon overwhelms most of us. A period when we are surrounded by an intoxicating atmosphere, created by our own thoughts and fancies, through whose medium exterior objects glow and sparkle with a borrowed light; for love lends a refulgence, emanating from itself, to whatever it touches. Let not any one deem the kindling of the Divine fire—the first throb of a pure passion in the heart of a boy—devoid of significance. It may not have the summer warmth or the autumn ripeness of maturity—but as the breath of spring has the faculty, peculiar to itself, of developing the latent energies of Nature, so, First Love carries that within it which reveals the dawning powers of

a young mind ; and forces, hitherto undreamt of, stand out, clear and distinct, in the radiance of the new-born joy.

We are aware that we are dilating on a theme apparently worn threadbare by poets and novelists ; but, in our estimation, the stuff still possesses considerable power of resistance, and has lost none of its vitality since the days when Schiller penned his—

“ Sweet hope and tender longing ! ye
 The growth of life's first Age of Gold,
 When the heart, swelling, seems to see
 The gates of heaven unfold.
 Oh, were it ever green ! Oh, stay,
 Linger, young Love, life's blooming May ! ”

On a Sunday in July, as they were returning home, they found their progress unexpectedly delayed by one of the ecclesiastical processions so common in Städtlein, where every parish church celebrates annually the nativity or the martyrdom of its patron saint, or the anniversary of the laying of its foundation-stone (or, more likely, the whole three !) by a *kirmes*, or grand “beating of the bounds” within which its spiritual jurisdiction lies. This was evidently a wealthy society, that made some noise in the world, for the clashing of a brass band accompanied the monotonous chanting of the choristers ; the wax candles borne by the acolytes were of unusual height, and the banners under which they staggered of more than ordinary weight and splen-

dour; the stream of school children, accompanied by their teachers—the girls in white, and carrying bouquets—seemed of interminable length; and the dresses of the priests who elevated the pyx were gorgeous in the extreme. One to whom the sight was a novelty might have enjoyed standing in the broiling heat, and being suffocated by the smoke of the flaring torches and bespattered by the greasy tears they dropped on all sides; but Mala and Arnold had witnessed it often enough to be able to think of nothing but the discomfort.

Others apparently chafed under it like themselves, for a voice close by exclaimed, "This is intolerable; is it not allowable to break through the ranks?"

"You had better not try it, sir," said a woman with a child in her arms. "There are two policemen on the opposite side."

The foreign accent of the first speaker struck at once on Arnold's ear; he glanced round, and there recurred to him the curious sensation of having met the stranger before. He was a tall, slender youth with brown curling hair, dressed in deep mourning. Our friend Robert (for of course it was he) returned the stare with interest.

"The 'strolling player,' or I'm a Dutchman!" he ejaculated mentally, as he ran rapidly over Alice's description: "tall, but stoops a little—broad-chested—fair—fine eyes—not handsome, but looks so when he smiles; that's my man!" and without further

hesitation he attracted our hero's attention by a loud "Hm!" which he followed up with, "Am I right in thinking that I have the pleasure of addressing Herr Arnold Müller?"

"That is my name," said Arnold, smiling, "and you are——"

"Robert Chesney," supplied the young baronet, promptly. "You don't know me, but I have heard much about you. How odd that we should meet here, is it not? I have made several ineffectual efforts to find you out—called at the Conservatorium, but a black-looking fellow in office there either could not or *would* not afford me any clue to your whereabouts."

"That is the librarian," returned Arnold; "he is not a pleasant man to deal with; he knows my address very well. I thought I had seen your face before. It must have been the resemblance to your cousin that attracted me."

"Poor Walter! he did not long enjoy the life you preserved him, Herr Müller;" and Robert turned away to hide his emotion. In a few moments he resumed, with his former gay tone, "What people you Germans are for pageants! do you know which parish this show represents?"

"I am almost a stranger here," said Arnold; "do you know, Mala?" and Robert perceived for the first time that his new friend was not alone.

"It is the St. Agnes festival," replied Mala; "did

you not observe the little child who walked in the midst, carrying the golden Lamb ? ”

Robert bowed, partly in acknowledgment of the information, partly of the pretty girl from whom it proceeded : “ Your sister, I presume ? ”

“ My sisters are not in town,” said Arnold, as he performed the ceremony of introduction.

The bulk of the procession was now past ; they picked their way through the green boughs with which the street had been liberally strewn, and emerged thankfully from the close quarters where they had been so long stifled. The scene of the delay was close to the ramparts ; ten minutes’ quick walking would take them home, and Robert accompanied them to the door. In parting, he said, “ May I call for you this afternoon ? If you have no better engagement, we might walk to Rudheim, and drink coffee there.”

“ I shall be very glad,” returned Arnold ; “ I have no engagement.”

“ Three o’clock, then,” said Robert, bidding adieu to Mala, and turning away at the same moment as aunt Martha appeared, in an agony of apprehension lest her brother should be kept waiting for dinner. She had been to hear her favourite preacher at the eleven o’clock mass, not satisfied with having previously attended (as was her invariable custom, winter and summer) the early service at half-past six. They all entered the house together, and,

according to their usual habit, joined the Director for a few minutes in the garden.

"Well, Martha," said her brother, "how was Father Geronimo to-day? Had you a feast of intellect?"

"Ah, Gottlob! could you but have heard him! There was not a dry eye in the church, he handled the text in so pathetic a way. His style appears to grow more and more flowery: of course, I don't pretend to follow all he says; it is often beyond my poor understanding. But to-day, I can assure you, he quite lost himself."

The Director's eye twinkled humorously: "I don't wonder at your appreciating him so highly, then, Martha. It used to be thought that no flight could rival that of the eagle, when he hides himself from mortal vision among the clouds. But when Father Geronimo soars, he seems to accomplish a double feat,—to be lost sight of, not only by the congregation, but by his own common sense! We poor, matter-of-fact creatures, must be content to hold on our course, if we can, without losing ourselves."

Aunt Martha had a dim perception that her brother was making fun of her, but his solemnity baffled her, and she said, with a sigh, "You are too deep for me, Gottlob. I can never make out exactly what you mean. Come, Mala, take off your bonnet; luncheon is ready. Ah!" she exclaimed, as her horror-struck gaze lighted on Mala's dress, "your pretty new silk!

where *have* you been, child, to get all those drops of wax on it?"

"That all comes from the St. Agnes kirmes, aunt," replied Mala, ruefully; "I was pressed so by the crowd, and the bearers held the torches so unevenly."

Hearing that the damage had been sustained in so good a cause, aunt Martha had not a word to say, and they were hurried off by the Director's "Tut, tut! what signify a few spots more or less? Let us have dinner; I am as hungry as a hawk! What can detain Wallraf?" for it was that gentleman's pleasure to spend the Sunday regularly with his friends. He did not make his appearance to-day until the first course had been removed, and then took his usual place without offering any apology for his want of punctuality. Aunt Martha was somewhat disconcerted that the soup had been allowed to cool; and to cover matters, the Director began—

"Who was it that accompanied you home to-day, Arnold? I was not aware of your having friends in Städtlein."

"I have none, sir. This is a young Englishman, Sir Robert Chesney."

"Does he reside here?"

"He is studying at the University, and lives with old Dr. Frank, in the large house just outside the West Gate, on the other side of the town. He asked permission to come here this afternoon."

"That is right; you ought to have some young friends. I know Frank very well, and recollect him telling me of a young Englishman having been placed under his care. How did you become acquainted?"

"It is rather a long story, Herr Director."

"A story?" said Mala, suddenly on the *qui vive*; "dear Arnold, do tell it to us!" and, on Herr Bergmann's joining in the request, he related the occurrence already known to the reader.

Arnold possessed the rare gift of telling a story well, and on this occasion he had the satisfaction of seeing that even Wallraf could not resist a smile at the clergyman's obstinacy in maintaining that his preserver's modicum of courage had been bequeathed to him by his grandmother.

"Yes," he said, as Arnold concluded, "these islanders are the most conceited race under the sun."

"Always excepting the French, Wallraf," said Mala, mischievously, for his dislike to the gay nation amounted to a mania.

"Not excepting the French, Mala. There is this difference between the conceit of the French and the English, that, however the former may boast and brag as a nation, the individual Frenchman has always a certain amount of *savoir vivre*, and respect for the national prejudices of others; whereas, the average Englishman struts about in the belief that to him, specially, Providence has committed the task

of impressing on us savages the extreme superiority of his insular institutions, with a secret consciousness that of these institutions he himself, as a free Briton, is the crown and the embellishment."

"Don't run down England!" said Herr Bergmann, "at least, not in my hearing. There is no country for which I have a greater love, my own naturally excepted. I passed some of the happiest years of my life there."

"Well," said Wallraf, deliberately, "*I* have not yet crossed the Channel, and probably never will do so; therefore I can only form my judgment by the specimens we meet with here. I must say, that if at any time I see a man making himself excessively ridiculous, criticising everybody around at the height of his voice, as though we were all fools, and understood nothing but our mother tongue; monopolizing the best seats in public conveyances; sprawling across the entire breadth of a railway carriage; smoking whether it is agreeable to the ladies present or not; and, in short, contriving to have his own way in everything, I say to myself, 'That is one of those mad Englishmen!' and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred I am correct."

"Of course, we all know that there are persons who commit these solecisms," said the Director, "but in my opinion the blame does not lie at the door of the English. The Yankees are the offenders."

"Yankees or English, they speak one tongue;

they are grafted on the same stock, and bear the same fruit. But it is something, Bergmann, to hear you admit that the Yankees even may be in fault,—you constitute yourself so much the champion of every people among whom you have lived.”

“Hardly that!” returned the Director, smiling; “but you would not blame the sailor who had been shipwrecked on the coast of Greenland for keeping ever after a warm corner of his heart and a good word on his lips for the Esquimaux that has shared with him his morsel of blubber, and allowed him to creep under his sealskin! I have met with great and varied kindness in my time, and gratitude is the only return I can make. With regard to America, I fear I did not stay long enough to get over first impressions.”

“Yet you were well received.”

“I was; and probably, had I visited the country as a young man, might have accommodated myself better to its ways. But there was a restlessness about the people, a constant unsettledness—resulting no doubt from their peculiar political creed—that jarred upon me. One man would spend his time in exalting the Stars and Stripes; another would immediately tread them under foot, and drag them through the mire—not intentionally, I grant you,—for no better reason than that his neighbour held an opposite opinion. The worship of the Almighty

Dollar stares you in the face at every turning ; and what seems to me an augury worse even than the mob-directed politics, is the total want of deference shown by the young to the old ; experience does not carry the same weight there that it does in the old country. In short, the American wants the aristocratic element that is inborn with the Englishman, and restrains him from going to excess in anything. I don't pretend to say that these views are correct ; you cannot learn a great people by a six months' residence among them. No doubt, had I remained longer, I should have perceived more clearly the firm old rock on which their national life is based. It is there, but the frothing and fuming, and the clamour of the waves that beat up against it, almost hide it from a stranger's view."

"No," said Wallraf, who could not long leave Arnold in peace, "I believe you are quite right—especially in what you say regarding the shooting of the young idea. I have been told that the new order of things which is to turn the world topsy-turvy and make the Yankees 'top o' creation' has communicated itself to the lower animals even, and a curious instance is to be seen in domestic poultry-yards. You know, Mala, that here a cock will 'crow with his latest breath' ; over there they are generous enough to abdicate in favour of rising talent. No sooner has young Chanticleer made his successful *début* as musician to the farmyard, than the parent

resigns his sovereignty. America is the sphere for enterprising bantams !”

Arnold knew very well to whom emigration was thus commended, but he said good-humouredly, “You should write a treatise on natural history, Herr von Wallraf.”

“I shall have much pleasure in doing so, Herr Arnold,” returned Wallraf, with much politeness, “if you will promise to read it.”

“Arnold !” said Mala, who during this dry discussion had been pondering on his story, “your tale does not end nicely. Did not the young lady speak to you, and say she would be eternally grateful—or something of that sort ?” (The reader will perceive—first, that Mala was making rapid progress in the lighter French literature ; and secondly, that Arnold had made no mention of the ring.)

“What should she have said, Mala, but that she was greatly indebted to me for saving her dress from being spoiled in the river ?”

“She must have been a strange girl to think of dress at such a time !” and Mala’s lip curled contemptuously.

“Not at all, my dear !” interposed aunt Martha, who now caught the drift of the conversation. “I only wish that you would profit a little by her example, for really I never saw any one so careless as you.”

Without paying much heed to this advice, Mala

went on : " But tell me, Arnold, what was she like ? was she pretty ? was she—was she anything like me ? "

" I really don't recollect," said Arnold. (Of course, he could have sketched Alice's features from memory, but how was it possible for him to venture on a description of female beauty, with Wallraf sitting opposite ?) " I suppose, like other young ladies, she had one mouth, two eyes, and a nose."

" Bah ! so has a doll ! "

" Bravo, Mala ! " said Wallraf, " a woman has a mouth and eyes—and so has a doll ! If *I* had been so bold as to say that, you would not have spoken to me for a week."

Mala and Wallraf kept up a perpetual war of words, and yet they were the best friends in the world. No feminine hand had a share in his unique domestic arrangements, which were attended to by a man cook and a male Jack-of-all-departments ; nevertheless, not a single alteration took place in his establishment without his having first consulted Mala (and through her, of course, aunt Martha) on the subject. Mala was the outlet for what we may call Wallraf's natural affections ; she helped to keep his heart tender, and to bring out green branches on the seared oak.

It was he who filled every corner of the house with flowers ; who planned with the gardener cun-

ningly devised ribbon borders and many-tinted floral snakes ; who, in spite of his strictures on female vanity, sent to Paris every season for the daintiest little hat that money could procure, which arrived, to the general wonder, apparently from the moon, for no trace of the donor could ever be found. Nothing displeased Wallraf so much as having his generosity remarked upon, and therefore there was a tacit understanding regarding his gifts. When Mala entered the drawing-room after luncheon, the first object that met her eye was a new group of rare exotics in a crystal vase of Bohemian manufacture, exquisite in colour and form. Wallraf's tardiness was now explained ; he had purposely waited till they were in the dining-room, that he might place the vase where it should greet Mala as a surprise.

"How beautiful ! how charming !" exclaimed the young girl, standing with clasped hands before the flowers ; "and they are for me ! Here is a little ticket on the foot of the vase : 'Mala, from a friend.' Papa, who *can* have sent them to me ?"

"No doubt the same good angel who sent you the love-birds the other day," said the Director, laughing.

"I wish I knew where he was, that I might thank him."

"Why *him* ? why not thank *her* ?" said Wallraf, who had been enjoying for the hundredth time the success of his strategy.

"Are there any female angels?" said Mala, doubtfully.

"I know one," murmured Arnold, *sotto voce*. He was rather bashful in paying compliments, and this time it fell to the ground, for its object was too much excited to notice it.

"It is terrible not to be able to express one's thanks," she sighed, and continued her examination of the gift. "What gorgeous flowers! I don't know one-half of their names."

"Come here, then, Mala, and let me teach you," said Wallraf; "I have a smattering of botany."

Mala placed the vase on a table close to him, and kneeling by his side, listened with eagerness to his glowing analysis of each separate blossom, and his description of the tropical home whence it had originally come; for Wallraf's "smattering" proved to be (like everything else in that iron brain) a thorough, well-digested knowledge of his subject; and Arnold, as he listened, felt his respect for his adversary involuntarily on the increase, hard as he strove against it. When the lecture was over, Mala, who knew how best to please him, said, "Now, in return for all this information, Wallraf, you shall have one of my prettiest bouquets."

"I fear your flowers will pale by comparison with these magnificent clusters," said her father.

"Roses are always sweet," returned Mala, sententiously, "so come along, Arnold, and help me to

gather them. I saw some lovely buds to-day just beyond my reach."

Arnold duly obeyed the mandate, and supplied the imperious little lady with plenty of material for her operations; but not satisfied with this, when they returned to the house she kept him continually on the alert. First, she discovered that she had not the proper green to mingle with the buds: "Dear Arnold, just get me a little of that delicate, feathery leaf that grows beside the walnut tree!" Now, she had no thread to twine round the stems; again, by some mysterious fate, her scissors had vanished; and every defect must be remedied by her devoted slave. The Director and his sister silently took note of these proceedings; their eyes met, and both smiled; they had evidently been thinking of one and the same thing.

"Mala," said her father, "you are a little tyrant! Take care you don't meet the fate you deserve."

"Not at all, papa," said she, innocently; "I must make the most of Sunday, for Arnold is too busy on other days to attend to me."

"Come now, Mala," said Wallráf, "let us take possession of your father's study. I will ensconce myself in that peculiarly comfortable chair of his, and you shall play me to sleep."

"That is beyond my powers," said Mala, laughing; "in the midst of the deepest slumber a wrong

note would cause you to spring up, and roar 'False!' with an ogre-like face that would haunt me for the whole week!"

"Mala!" said aunt Martha's shocked voice, "my dear Mala, how can you be so rude?"

"Let her talk, Fräulein," said Wallraf, resignedly, "she amuses me. She reminds me of a kitten that purrs to you under pretence of fondness, all the time it is scratching you with its little sharp claws."

"Was I rude?" cried Mala, penitently; "I did not mean to be so. Dear Wallraf, shall I play to you?"

"No, you little puss! not to-day. I am, as you say, rather ogreish, and I might find occasion to scold you, and then I could never forgive myself. Your kitten-brains would not recover the shock."

"My kitten-brains!" exclaimed Mala, indignantly; "they must be made of pretty tough stuff, considering the amount of buffeting they have already had to undergo from you."

"Pooh! the sighing of the south wind! Come down to the Conservatorium some day, when I am breaking in a precocious genius. You would never forget it, Mala! At the mere sight of my wrath you would fly; you would vanish into space—that is to say, into the tiniest cupboard you could find—like Ginevra; and I should discover you, trembling like an aspen-leaf—shivering so that for the rest of your life you would not be able to dispense with a fur cloak!"

"Your poor students!" said Mala, thoughtfully, somewhat appalled by this awful description, "how they must hate you."

"Thank you, Mala."

"Do you know, Wallraf, I have some intention of writing an anonymous letter to them, telling them not to be afraid of you, for your bark is worse than your bite."

"Do so, Mala. No doubt, if they have not already discovered that, it will encourage them greatly."

At this moment the servant threw open the door, and announced "Sir Robert Chesney."

CHAPTER VII.

ROBERT.

ENTER Robert—in the snowiest of frilled shirts, the stiffest of white cravats, the shiniest of patent kid boots, in his hand the most wonderful of wondrous-headed canes; altogether, despite his mourning, the most elaborately got-up little dandy that ever stepped across a lady's drawing-room.

At his heels sneaked another Dandie—a beau, alas! in nothing but the name, who retired as soon as possible beneath his master's chair. We say *who* advisedly, for *which* is hardly the pronoun to have as its antecedent a dog of such sagacity and such knowledge of human nature as the one we now desire to introduce to the reader. .

His sneaking look arose from bashfulness; his predilection for the confined space he had chosen as a retreat, from an innate perception that all narrow apertures whatsoever had been expressly designed by nature for the admittance of his nose—a feature in his character which might, by good education, have been turned to utility in the unearthing of badgers, &c. As we have hinted, Dandie

was no beauty, except in the eyes of his master, who firmly believed him to be a genuine specimen of the famous mustard-and-pepper breed; but if the truth must be told, there was a little of the mongrel about his legs, which were too long to be in harmony with the rest of the body. His head covered a multitude of defects, literally and figuratively. It might have formed a study for Landseer, and Robert fully intended that, whenever he came into his kingdom, the great artist should have the benefit of him as a model.

"But how about that misshapen body of his?" said a friend, somewhat doubtful of the extreme delight that was to be manifested by the painter in the subject of his labours.

"Oh, they know how to manage all that," Robert would reply; "these artistic fellows can make Pegasus out of a Suffolk Punch. We'll throw a drapery over him, or we'll have merely the head issuing from a fox-earth."

In the interim, Dandie, unconscious of the honour in store for him, was by no means content to await passively his immortalization. His maxim seemed to be "Enjoy life while you can;" and it was in his mode of carrying out his principles that he displayed the tact to which we have alluded. So long as the conversation related to grave and serious matters, Dandie wisely remained in obscurity—aware that, by obtruding himself on public notice at such a time, he ran the chance of receiving a kick for his

pains. No sooner, however, did a topic of a livelier nature come above-board, than with it also appeared Mr. Dandie, who fully appreciated the necessity of striking while the iron was hot, or, in other words, of profiting by the weaker moments of his human brethren. Advancing into the midst of the circle, he would plant himself bolt upright on his hind legs, and with head posed knowingly on one side, tail wagging encouragingly, and fore-paws waving condescendingly—first to the right, then to the left, like a sovereign, or at least a privy-purse, bestowing largess,—Dandie said, as plainly as though words had been at his command, “Make yourselves at home, good people! laugh and be merry! what is the use of living if we are always to look sour? pray, what’s the joke?”

We regret to be obliged to add, that not a member of the company could put his hand into his pocket, even for the purpose of extracting his handkerchief, without Dandie’s abandoning his dignified position, and taking up an attitude of importunate begging as close to the hope-inspiring pocket as possible. In mentioning this trait we touch upon the gravest defect in his disposition—his decided greed. Robert would not allow that this could be a disadvantage. “If he were not a bit of a *gourmand*,” said he, “he would be coarse.” But the fact remains, that for sugar and sweet biscuits Dandie would have sold his—tail, if it had been a vendible article. On the present

occasion he must have fancied himself in paradise, and Mala an attendant houri, for she supplied him so liberally that his master had to interfere.

"I dare say you think him a glutton, Fräulein, but he is not that. I verily believe this is the only dinner he has had to-day. Just as we were starting, he trotted up from the kitchen with a clean-picked bone in his mouth, which he deposited at my feet; and then walked round and round it, rubbing himself up against me, as though he would have said, 'Just look what sort of fare they give me!' but I had no time to make a row about it, for I had promised Herr Müller to be here by three.—Now, sir, you have had a good dinner; stand up and say grace,"—a proceeding which consisted in a benignant wave of the fore-paws, and an affectionate lick of his master's hand. Aunt Martha looked somewhat askance at this ceremony.

"You don't think it wrong, do you, Fräulein? I'm his Providence, you know; he must be taught gratitude."

"What a clever fellow!" said Mala, admiringly.

"Is he not?" assented Robert, with eagerness (he would have descanted on Dandie's good properties until midnight, had he previously secured a Job for an auditor), "and is it not monstrous that they don't take to him more up at the West Gate? I assure you I have quite a battle to be allowed to keep him indoors; and yet a more inoffensive,

useful fellow never breathed. What he has saved the Frau Doctorin in watching the house, and frightening away stray cats and thieves, no one can tell. She ought to have a little heart for the poor brute,—ought she not, old fellow?" and Dandie responded by a sympathetic wag, intended for his master, and a low howl equivalent to "three groans" for the Frau Doctorin. "You see, Fräulein, he understands every word we are saying. In fact, I often think the Hindoos are right after all, and that there is such a thing as the transmigration of souls. Do you believe in it, Herr Director?" he added, addressing that gentleman, who had joined Mala and him at the window.

"Well, no, I cannot say that I do," said the Director, laughing.

"*I* do, a little; and I'm sure all the street-boys in our neighbourhood are morally certain that the spirit of a departed comrade has passed into Dandie, for they treat him exactly like one of themselves. If they want to irritate him, for instance, they never think of picking up a stone to fling at him, as he lies on the balcony in front of my window; they simply make a grimace, or put out their tongue, or shriek out one of their horrible cries; and Dandie is furious. He knows quite well they mean to insult him, and of course he pays them back in their own coin. He is the mortal enemy of half the errand-boys for miles round."

Robert's panegyric on his trusty follower was interrupted by the return of Arnold, who alone is to blame for this lengthy disquisition on the merits and the demerits of Dandie Pepper, Esq. He had suddenly recollected as they were on the point of setting off, that he had omitted to attend to a little matter entrusted to him the day before by the Director ; and while Robert was waiting till this should be arranged, Dandie came into notice as a stopgap. For any other purpose dogs appear to us as objectionable in a novel as they seem to be in those public resorts placarded on the outside, "Dogs and other nuisances not admitted."

"Thank Heaven ! they are gone," said Wallraf as the door closed upon them. "How insufferably one is bored by a boy of that age !—either he is so immersed in *mauvaise honte* that it is impossible to extract a syllable from him, or he talks down everybody else in the room, like this jackanapes, in the belief that his click-clack is as sweet to everybody as to himself."

"I like the young fellow's honest face," replied the Director ; "there is no nonsense about him—except a little foppery, and that will soon die a natural death. With all his talkativeness he was not forward."

"No, but Arnold should give him the hint to leave his dog at home next time."

"It is a good sign when a young man has a love

for dumb animals ; depend upon it, there is not much evil in *that* lad. I recollect when you used to be of the same opinion, Wallraf. Lucien never forgot your having caught him in the act of wringing the neck of one of Mala's canaries !"

"Nor shall *I* ever forget it. I learned more of Lucien's character in a moment than years will have power to efface. But, with regard to Sir Robert and his dog, let him indulge his hobby by all means ; but let him also keep it to himself. Moderation in all things, and especially in hobbies ! He seems a good deal younger than Arnold."

"And vastly more unformed ; but they will do each other good. Arnold is far too serious for his years ; in many things he strikes me as being more like *five-* than *two-and-twenty*. I am better pleased that he should have found a friend in a bright, buoyant spirit like this young Englishman, than if he had met with some one more akin to himself."

"I cannot see this wonderful solidity and wisdom-beyond-his-years that you profess to have discovered in Arnold," said Wallraf, peevishly ; "to me he seems nothing more nor less than a mass of self-will rolled up in an outer covering of sensitiveness. If you attempt to do him a real service by striking through to the root of the matter, he bristles up like a hedgehog."

"Arnold's will develop into a fine character

through time," said the Director, briefly; "at present he shows his worst side to you, and I don't wonder at it."

Unconscious of the criticisms that were being passed upon them, the two young men leisurely took their way towards Rudheim. It was a lovely afternoon, not so hot as in the morning, for a fresh breeze had sprung up, and the promenade under the lime trees by the river was very enjoyable. The village whither they were bound lay at a distance of no more than five miles from town, so that they had abundance of time to be back by eight o'clock; and it was well there arose no occasion for haste, since Dandie made a point of vanishing at regular intervals of a quarter of an hour, which necessitated a pause of five minutes, until the tip of his black nose appearing above ground relieved the anxiety of his master, who could not be dissuaded from the belief that all the dog-stealers in the land were on the look-out for his treasure. Of course, Arnold was favoured with a repetition of the particulars regarding the phenomenon which his unfortunate absence from the drawing-room had caused him to lose, together with many more anecdotes which, for reasons stated before, we spare the reader.

"There is only one thing that provokes me in Dandie," concluded Robert; "the more you want him to show off to advantage, in the worse light does he come out" (like many of his human

brethren). "I could have throttled him to-day, when he came slinking in with his tail between his legs, as if he had not a single idea in his head!—for all the world like Uriah Heep on four legs!"

"Uriah Heep!" repeated Arnold, innocently (it was with some difficulty he followed Robert's rapid talk, and by no means pure English), "what a peculiar name! A Jew, I suppose? One of your friends?"

Robert burst out laughing: "*Gott bewahr!* I would not touch the reptile with a pair of tongs. Don't you know Dickens, Herr Müller?"

"I began 'Bleak House' once, but the style was too idiomatic for me at that time. I think I could master it now; but, to tell the truth, I was not particularly attracted to it. The story seemed very tedious."

"*Tedious!* Dickens tedious!" began Robert, hotly, but stopped short. "Well, I'll allow that 'Bleak House' is humdrum; but you should not have begun with that. You must put yourself under *my* direction," he continued, complacently, "I am a walking index to Dickens. I'll introduce you to old Peek-veek (as you *Deutschers* call him), and to Samivel, my boy! and the Shepherd and his 'partic'lar wanity,' and to jolly Mark Tapley and dear old Tom Pinch, and that vagabond Pecksniff, and Mrs. Micawber and the twins, and Mother Gamp and the villain Steerforth, and to Little Nell and the Dwarf, and Tom Scott." (It may be remarked

en passant, that for the last-mentioned individual Robert had a "partic'lar" *penchant*—why, we have never been able to discover, since the young gentleman has no very engaging qualities. The attraction may consist in his having discovered a mode of showing defiance beyond even Robert's powers of invention.) "And—and—in short, Müller, I'll provide you with a sovereign remedy against low spirits."

"Thank you," said Arnold, laughing, "I must place myself under your tuition at once. It is rather mortifying to hear you talk with such *gusto* of characters who are mere names to me. The Director has 'David Copperfield;' he was laughing over it the other evening."

"'David Copperfield'? Ah! you can't do better than begin with that. And if there should be anything you don't understand—in the way of slang, you know, just come to me. I'm a first-rate hand at that. My uncle has an idea that Dickens is excessively low," Robert went on, laughing. "At least, he had until he saw how poor Walter relished him. That was the beginning of my partiality for Dickens. During those long, long days when he could get no rest, the only thing that helped him to forget himself was first 'The Old Curiosity Shop,' then all the others, read aloud by Alice or me. We went through the whole series in this way. I often used to think it was a great pity Dickens could not

know how much pain and suffering he had eased. It seemed to me a curious thing, though, when Walter was well he never asked for him, always for Browning or Carlyle, or some one equally beyond my grasp. Poor Walter!" and Robert's chatter ceased for a moment. The memory of this cousin was never long absent from his thoughts.

"As I told you," he continued, "my uncle does not approve of Dickens; the Boots, and the sailors, and the monthly nurses are too much for his dignity. I shall never forget once hearing him read '*Bardell versus Pickwick*' (Alice was from home, and I had an inflamed eye, so could not officiate); you don't know it, but you have seen the Rector, and can fancy him interpreting a comic scene! He declaimed it straight through, like 'To be or not to be!' O Lord!" and the tears streamed down Robert's cheeks at the recollection. "Poor Walter was in an agony. He did not want to hurt his father, so he pretended to be very much down-in-the-mouth, and proposed one of Blair's sermons. Shakespeare is my uncle's favourite."

"And doubtless yours also," said Arnold, with animation.

"No!" answered Robert, very decidedly.

"No? Why not? I should think the very thought of being his countryman ought to send a thrill of pride through you."

"If you had had him dinned into your ears as

much as I have, Herr Müller, you would have wished him at the bottom of the Red Sea before he wrote those plays of his. *Plays*, indeed! They've been harder work to me than anything else I ever had to do in my life."

"What in the world do you mean?"

"I'll tell you, as you seem so shocked at my Vandalism; then judge if I have any reason to love the Sweet Swan! Last long vacation I joined my uncle, as I always do. They were in Switzerland at the time, and of course there was plenty of fun going; walking-parties, picnics, boating, and so forth. Well, it had been suggested to my uncle by a long-nosed Professor from Oxford (I have his sanctimonious phiz before me now) that this Continental education might cause me to forget my own language; and the Rector consequently determined, there and then, to counteract this evil.

"Next morning I was summoned to his private room. The moment I put my foot within the door I knew something was up. There sat my uncle at the table, with the same magisterial look I had seen him wear once before, when he sent old Giles Heywood to gaol for poaching a hare—and before him an immense book that might have felled an ox, had you thrown it at his head. One look was enough; I knew the wretch,—the library edition of Shakespeare, without which the Rector never stirs from home—and I began to shake in my shoes.

but my uncle took it up in that way, and was furious.

“‘How dare you presume to exercise your hobbish wit, and travesty what is (*sacred*, I verily believe he was going to say, but he thought better of it) one of the grandest productions of the human mind?’ and then he pitched into me right and left, until I grew as sulky as a dancing bear, and *would* not have answered if I *could*. When his wrath had subsided, he began, ‘I shall suit my questions to your capacity, sir. Who is Caliban?’

“‘The Moor of Venice,’ said I, as innocently as possible.

My uncle looked up savagely, but thought I was in earnest. “What is remarkable about Hamlet?’ he went on.

“‘He tamed the Shrew.’

“‘Good God!’ says my uncle, ‘is it possible there can be such ignorance in the nineteenth century! I suppose you could not even tell me where to find the passage beginning, “Farewell, a long farewell, to all my greatness”?’

“‘Certainly,’ said I, ‘it is where Christopher Sly discovers he is only a tinker.’

“My uncle cast a look of withering scorn at me, but did not deign to set me right.

“‘Perhaps you will kindly inform me what Hamlet says at the open grave of Ophelia?’

“Here I was put to my wits’ end, for the few hack-

neyed quotations scattered through my brain had to me no connection : ' Frailty ! thy name is Woman ! ' I began, thinking I had made a lucky hit, for it seemed to me *apropos*, and I knew that it occurred in Hamlet.

" My uncle rose from his chair. ' Very well, sir,' says he, quietly, though I could see that he was in a white heat, ' we'll take steps to remedy this matter. You will come here to me every morning at the same hour, ten o'clock ;—you may go now.'

" So I thankfully made my escape, only to wander about discousolately by myself the whole day, for they were all gone—even Walter. A pretty life that blessed Shakespeare led me the rest of the vacation. When everybody was living out-of-doors enjoying the bright sunshine, there was I, mewed up like an old Tabby, slaughtering Desdemona (and a good many Innocents besides), abusing my own crooked back, demanding my pound of flesh, poisoning off Juliet, diving into the mysteries of *wappened*, *unhouselled*, *twangling-Jack*, and other delectable expressions,—all under my uncle's inspection—for, to do him justice, he punished himself as well as me. The best of it was," pursued Robert with a laugh, " if at any time I tried to save his clerical ears (you know Shakespeare does not mince matters—he is rather a ticklish customer to read aloud) he would thunder, ' What do you mean, sir, by tampering with the text ? ' so I swallowed my punctiliousness, and gave it him hot and strong,

just as it stood. The most irksome task to me was, his insisting on my getting all the well-known passages by heart, lest, as he very politely feared, I should at some future time disgrace myself and him. I don't mind now," added Robert, by way of anodyne; "I have found it very useful in private theatricals; I can get up a part in no time."

"Don't blame Shakespeare that you have an antipathy to him!" said Arnold, to whom this novel mode of commending the study of the classics to a young mind was not a little astonishing. "You should read him again for your own pleasure."

"Thank you," said Robert dryly, "I have had enough of him to last *my* life!" and they walked on for a time in silence.

"Of all your novelists," said Arnold, "I like Scott best."

"Yes—Scott is all very well. His love-making and his fighting are good: and I like his Wandering Willies, and Caleb Balderstones, and Lucky Mucklebackits; but he is awfully prosy—in his description of scenery, for instance."

"How can you say so?" cried Arnold, with sparkling eyes; "to me his scenery is his strong point!—think of the mountain view in 'Rob Roy'—can you not feel the breeze, and see the lake glittering in the sunshine? There is a freshness, an open-air freedom about Sir Walter inexpressibly charming. Scotland must be a glorious land!"

To those who like it," said Robert, shrugging his shoulders; "I cannot say that I do."

"Have you been there?"

"Yes; when I was about sixteen, just before we came here. There was a strike among the miners in the North, and my uncle feared those on my estate might get infected, and so—with the idea that the sight of the heir would possibly have a good effect—we set off at a moment's notice. It was a miserable journey; my uncle was in the devil's own temper all the way (he had recently broken his arm, and consequently been debarred from attending the Meet); and while we were away from home, we had not one fine day—nothing but rain! rain! rain! varied by hail and sleet.—I shall have to show face in Scotland again, so I wish I could free myself from the impressions of that visit. 'Land of the mountain and the flood,' indeed! Land of smoke and dirt!—Such squalid, miserable people! begrimed with coal-dust, and speaking a dialect that sounded to my Saxon ears a compromise between Dutch and the language of Tahiti, whatever that may be. And they all took such an interest in me, stroking me down, as if I had been a tame zebra exhibited for their special amusement. One old creature with no teeth, and scarcely any hair, who appeared to have left her gown at home and come out in her petticoat (as indeed all the women had) exclaimed with great earnestness, 'He's a bonnie laddie, wi' his rid

cheeks and his curly pow—but I doot, I verra much doot, he'll gang the way o' all his forebears—he's ower spindly i' the shanks—ye maun be guid til the bairn, Mr. Stephen, an' gie him plenty asses' milk.' I remember the old hag well, for what she said seemed to make my uncle uneasy, but I could only give a haphazard guess at her meaning. It was certainly intended as something uncomplimentary, for she called me a *bairn* (which means *child*), and that to a fellow who feels his whiskers pushing their way through is not very palatable.—Then the allusion to what she considered my natural nourishment!—I think I have very little reason to admire Scotland, or the Scotch. But here we are—at Rudheim."

The sole attraction of Rudheim consisted in some very pretty gardens sloping to the river, radiant with gay flower-beds, and dotted over with arbours formed of vines and other broad-leaved plants. The scene was sufficiently animated, for the place was a favourite resort of the citizens of Städtlein, many of whom were to be seen there this afternoon, enjoying with their families the magnificent weather and the change from the dusty town. Amongst others, Arnold recognised the pastor who had preached in the morning, with his wife, and several wealthy merchants of the town who had dined once or twice with the Director since his arrival; but they did not remember him. Robert was greeted by a party of

students, who, distinguishable by their many-coloured caps, formed a group apart by themselves. He contrived to ward off the invitations noisily pressed upon him, and with a little perseverance, they succeeded in finding a small, unoccupied arbour close to the water, where after some delay coffee was brought to them.

During their short intercourse there had sprung up a mutual liking between the young men. Arnold had expected to find in Robert either a second edition of Mr. Chesney, or a lackadaisical, Byronic youth of the stamp of one who had been a fellow-student of his at Z——; he was, therefore, agreeably surprised in the young baronet, under whose flippancy and boyish talk he imagined he could perceive a considerable amount of good sense and right feeling. He did not know that poor Robert's demonstrativeness originated, like his trusty follower's sneaking gait, in an over-sensitive timidity; still less did he dream that he himself was partly to blame for it on the present occasion. Under Wallraf's caustic remarks, Arnold had unconsciously acquired something of that gentleman's reserve of manner; he had been compelled to assume it, in fact, by way of armour; and for some time Robert was unable to determine to his satisfaction whether Arnold was quite what he called "above-board," or only "quizzing" him. This suspicion, galling above any other to the newly-fledged youth, was soon lulled to rest. Before they

arrived at Rudheim, Robert, with his usual impulsiveness, decided that "Müller was a first-rate fellow—true as steel;" and naturally, with the feeling that he could trust his companion, his dread of ridicule vanished. He especially observed with satisfaction that Arnold did not smoke. On all sides meerschaums and cigars reeked furiously, and occasionally the odour of tobacco penetrated into their retreat more perceptibly than was altogether agreeable, and roused a slight cough, which was at all times latent in Robert.

"Won't you have a cigar in self-defence?" said Arnold.

Robert blushed, "I cannot smoke."

This was evidently a confession which cost him an effort to make, for he waited in expectation of some remark from Arnold on so unheard-of a peculiarity. None was forthcoming, however, and he continued: "When we first came over here, Walter and I, we met so many walking-chimneys, that we thought we should be compelled to puff too (as you advised me just now) in self-defence; but it was of no use, we had to give it up. Surely you smoke?—you look strong enough," and Robert regarded the broad chest of his friend with something like a look of envy.

Arnold laughed: "It is not *that* which makes me abstain. My poor father used to say, that no one should take to smoking until he felt the necessity for it. So, as I have not yet experienced this, I have

not begun. Some people cannot do without it; the Director, for instance, smokes from morning till night; but then it soothes him. He has a great many annoyances, and his cigar blows them away, or helps to do so."

"That's a good dodge," observed Robert thoughtfully. "If the fellows tease me again about not being able to smoke, I shall tell them that I am keeping the habit in reserve, as we do stimulants, against the time when I shall be grey-headed and full of cares."

Arnold smiled. "It is evidently a serious question with you! To smoke, or not to smoke—eh?"

"Oh! it's all very well for you who *can* smoke if you will," retorted Robert fretfully. "You've no notion how frightfully those Corps-students enrage me by spreading about, that because I'm an *Englishman* I can't manage it! I should not mind it so much if there were another fellow here able to uphold the credit of old England, but the only one besides myself is a puny little dwarf. There are plenty of Scotch good at a pipe; but then they are so deucedly unsociable, they don't count for much. I can assure you, I have often made myself ill, just to keep up the honour of the country."

This novel patriotism was too much for Arnold's gravity, and he exploded in a laugh, in which, after due consideration, Robert joined.

During their homeward walk, although Arnold did

not depart from his usual quiet reticence, Robert had lost his awe of it, and contrived to elicit a good deal of information regarding our hero's mode of life, which seemed to astonish him not a little.

"What do you call *study* then? You don't mean to say that you play on the piano the whole day?"

"Certainly not!—there are many things to be learned, besides mere pianoforte-playing, before a man can call himself a musician."

"Such as ——?"

"You would probably not understand me if I told you—counterpoint, composition, violin, organ, *ensemble*-playing, mechanism of different instruments, orchestral conducting, development of the voice, different styles of music—church-music, chamber-music—history of the art, its relation to poetry and the drama, and so forth! Now are you any wiser?"

"Not much! Do you really like it?"

"I could be happy in no other life," said Arnold simply; "you have not been thrown much among musicians. Wait till you know a little more of us, then you will be able to judge whether it is a pleasant life or not."

"If they are all like your governor—Director, I mean—I should not object to be turned into a fiddler myself! I like him amazingly; he is a regular brick!"

"A *what*?" echoed Arnold in displeased sur-

prise, for the word *brick* was known to him only in its conventional sense.

"A fine old German gentleman, then!"

Arnold's brow relaxed: "Yes!" he said heartily, "he has the best heart and the best head in the world!"

"Herr Bergmann does not seem to me like my uncle—he would not expect a fellow to be a prig?"

"I fear my knowledge of English is very imperfect," said Arnold apologetically; "I really don't know what you mean."

"I fear your knowledge of English is more correct than mine," returned Robert laughing; "you are like that fellow, what's-his-name?—who was known to be no Greek from the purity of his language. I have got so accustomed to talk slang, that I really don't know it from dictionary-English. My uncle says I speak like a stable-boy, and I dare say he is right. But let me think," mused Robert, "how shall I explain to you what a *prig* is?—The Director would not expect Dandie, for instance, to sit up all day on his hind legs, and look the other way if a bone were thrown him?"

Arnold laughed: "Now I understand you! No! Herr Bergmann is natural himself, and likes others to be so too."

"That's the man for me!" said Robert, emphatically; "no humbug!—I mean, no affectation!"

(I say, Müller, it will do me good to talk to you.) Who is the dark, grave-looking man that was with him ? ”

“ Herr von Wallraf.—He is very clever.”

“ He may be able to see through a millstone for aught I care ! ” said Robert. “ He and I would get to loggerheads, if we were left alone together for five minutes. He kept darting thunderbolts at poor Dandie all the time you were absent from the room ; —but we didn’t care, did we, Dandie ? It’s quite enough to be obliged to *duck under* to one individual in this world, isn’t it, old fellow ? ”

Arnold did not care to discuss Wallraf, and they walked on in silence. At length he said, “ If it would not be too painful a subject, I should like to hear something about your cousin—did he live long after that day ? ”

Robert did not reply for some minutes ; then he said abruptly, “ I don’t mind speaking about Walter to you, Müller, for, do you know, you remind me very much of him.”

“ I ? Impossible ! There is no resemblance between us.”

“ Not in reality, perhaps ; but when you smile, I could almost fancy Walter stood by me. Well, I told you I had seen him the very evening of the accident. I had gone to N—— against my uncle’s wish ; but I had a sort of presentiment—felt as if I *must* see him once more ; and glad I am now that I

did!" Robert paused for a moment. "He seemed more lively and in less pain than usual, and talked to me a great deal about trying to get on better with my uncle after he should be gone. Poor Walter! he was bent on making us understand each other!—Next morning I learned that he had been taken worse during the night; a medical man had been called in, and he looked very gravely on the case. But Walter had so often been seized in a similar way, that my uncle refused to believe in any immediate danger. I begged and prayed him to allow me to remain with them until the crisis was past; however, nothing would satisfy him but that I should return at once to Städtlein. He even went on about the useless expenditure of my journey!—fancy talking about expense to a fellow that's coming into seven thousand a year! I was furious, and told Alice that I meant to linger about in the village; but she said it might come to the Rector's ears, and his irritation would certainly hurt Walter, so for *his* sake I consented to go back, Alice undertaking to telegraph to me at once, if any change took place.—Müller!" Robert went on excitedly, "I am going to tell you something that you will perhaps think absurd and foolish; but it's as true as that you and I are walking together on this road!"

"No," said Arnold kindly, for his young companion's agitation made him regret that he had broached the subject. "Why should I think it absurd,

if it is true? something in connection with your cousin?"

"Yes," said Robert, in a husky voice; "as we drew near Städtlein, the sun was setting among the hills. I don't often notice such things, they're not much in my line; but that evening I felt very miserable and solitary, sitting by myself in a corner of the carriage, and so I took to watching the different tints of the sky, and thinking of Walter. Suddenly my eye was attracted to a magnificent golden cloud—it opened, and within I saw him standing—as distinctly as I now see you—his face wearing the same expression that it had done the evening before, only brighter, and more heavenly. I cannot tell you how I felt; I cried 'Walter! Walter!' and he waved his hand to me as if for a last farewell, and faded away.—I needed no message now to tell me what had happened. When I arrived at home Frau Frank met me with tears in her eyes—(I have loved the old lady ever since). 'There is a telegram for you,' she said. I did not ask a single question, but ordered the man to drive back to the station, where I fortunately caught the mail train. When I got to N—— it was too late, Walter was gone; they told me he had died at a quarter-past eight—the very time when he appeared to me."

Arnold saw how the boy's excited fancy, and his intense love for his cousin had combined to produce the supernatural vision; but he would not let fall a

word that might indicate disbelief: "I have heard of such cases," he said, quietly, when he was startled to perceive the tears trickling down Robert's face, and to hear him exclaim in an undertone, "O Walter! why, *why* did you leave me?"

Arnold had not suspected the depth of feeling that lay beneath the light-hearted exterior.

"Let us walk on the beach," he said, and drew Robert gently from the public promenade. The tide was low, and they could almost reach the town in this way.

In a few minutes Robert recovered his self possession: "You must think me a great fool," he said, "but you cannot imagine how badly I need a friend, and Walter was everything to me. My father died when I was little better than a baby; and as for my mother—well! the less I say about her, the better. I have not seen her for eight years; she is so engrossed by her second brood that she does not care a jot for me. Then, she hates my uncle. I used to feel pretty bitter against him too; but Walter's death has been an awful blow to him. I never saw a man so suddenly aged in my life."

When they arrived at Dr. Frank's house, Robert said abruptly, "Müller, I think we shall be friends!"

"I hope so, Sir Robert," returned Arnold.

"Haug the *Sir*! call me Robert!"

"Is not this rather sudden?"

"Ah! I see how it is! you think me a foolish,

scatterbrained fellow, not worthy of your friendship; but I'm determined to be *your* friend, whether you will be mine or not. So good-night, *Arnold*;" and he detained his hand, which he had shaken heartily in his English fashion, until he had extorted from him a "Good night, *Robert*."

"Poor young fellow!" thought Arnold, as he pursued his homeward way, "I'm sorry for him—with all his wealth!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL."

ROBERT'S visits to Herr Bergmann's became more and more frequent, until they were almost of daily occurrence. He brought Frau Frank (a good-natured old lady who, having no children of her own, doted upon her young English boarder) to call for Fräulein Martha, and the intimacy between the two families speedily ripened into friendship. The Director, as we have seen, had been pleased with the young man at first; he liked to renew old associations with him; and was glad to have discovered a means of inducing **Arnold to take** the relaxation necessary for health. Robert, in fact, became a general favourite. Mala and he were fast friends, the connecting link between them being, not only Dandie, but a thousand and one mischievous schemes, of which unconscious aunt Martha or the Alte was the object.

Rarely did an afternoon pass without his making his appearance in Arnold's study, and although our hero at first protested somewhat strongly against this invasion of his domain (for the young baronet felt as little compunction in introducing a whistling

accompaniment into the Moonlight. Sonata as though the subject had been "Old Folks at Home," or "Early in the Morning" with bones *obbligato*), he soon discovered that he must take Robert as he found him, for shake him off he could not.

With all the young man's self-will, it seemed a necessity to him to have some one older than himself on whom he could lean, on whose judgment he could rely; some one who could help him, as he phrased it, "to keep steady." He confided to Arnold at an early stage of their friendship the secret cause of this desire: his intense longing to be free from the jurisdiction of his uncle, and the power conferred upon the latter by Sir Edward's will to prolong his minority at discretion.

"You know, Arnold, I'm not a bad fellow at bottom," he concluded, "but I believe my uncle is thoroughly persuaded that I am, and it would require very little to prejudice him completely against me, and make him declare me unfit to be entrusted with my own property. But I'm determined to outwit him! I'll do my best to keep in the straight path until I'm one-and-twenty, and then, should he thwart me in what I have set my heart upon, I'll emigrate to the backwoods—if I have to work my passage out before the mast!—and lead a free life there until the three years are over. I won't stay here to be 'nagged at!'"

Arnold smiled at this boyish threat, but he saw

plainly that there was a hitch between Robert and his uncle, in which neither was altogether blameless, and used his influence over the young man to induce him to fulfil his part of the relationship in a better spirit—a course in which the Director helped not a little by his kindly and judicious advice.

As time went on, Arnold began to take in Robert's affections that place which had formerly been filled by Walter, partly, no doubt, from the fancied resemblance between them, but mainly on account of his possessing the earnestness and steady purpose in which the lad felt himself deficient. On the whole, a worse event might have happened to the young baronet than his chance encounter with the "strolling player!"

One evening, the two young men had been on the river. Arnold supped at Dr. Frank's, and was, consequently, rather late in reaching home. He expected to find the party in the garden as usual, enjoying the cool air, but to his surprise found it deserted.

He re-entered the house, and as he was slowly ascending the staircase a sound fell upon his ear that caused him to start with pleasure and surprise, and held him spell-bound until the last echo had died away. It was one of his own compositions—a trio which he had that morning given to the Director for revision, and the pianoforte part now floated to him from hands that certainly proved themselves

equal to the task entrusted to them. As the harmony roused by an exquisite touch reached him, he asked himself wonderingly: could it be possible that it was in reality his own?—that out of his dark, confused imaginings had arisen this aerial picture, this magical atmosphere wherein Titania and her dainty elfish train seemed to disport themselves? His heart beat fast; a film gathered before his eyes; he opened the door of the Director's study, and walked in like one in a dream. Wallraf was at the piano, Schenk and another beside him, instruments in hand; in the bay window were Herr Bergmann, Mala, and several strangers. They were eagerly discussing some topic, evidently the new trio, and the Director alone was observant enough to notice Arnold's entrance. As he saw him advancing to the piano he hastily motioned him to silence, but Arnold was too pre-occupied to take the hint. "Herr von Wallraf!" he said earnestly, "how am I to thank you for this—this very great pleasure?"

"He has put his foot in it!" muttered Herr Bergmann, while Wallraf looked up in amazement and said, "Thank me for what? I am not aware that I have been playing for *your* special gratification."

The light vanished from Arnold's face at this rebuff—all his delight fled. "Then you do not know that the trio is mine?"

"*Yours!*" ejaculated Wallraf, letting the MS. fall

from his hands, and adding abruptly, "I thought it was too crude to be the work of an artist." There was silence for a moment; he then rose, and without further ceremony left the room.

"If this trio is yours, Müller," said Schenk cordially, "you will be an honour to us all some day. Here have we been playing it in the full belief that it was Bergmann's! It certainly occurred to me that the Director had hit upon a new vein, but then, we are accustomed to novelties from him."

Not even this friendly praise could efface Arnold's disappointment. "Dear Herr Bergmann," he said reproachfully, "why did you show this to Wallraf? why did you let him think it was yours? No doubt he will imagine now that it is *I* who have done this, who have induced him to look at my work under false pretences!"

Mortification at the miscarriage of his ruse for commending his *protégé* to Wallraf's favour had hitherto kept the Director silent, but the sight of Arnold's vexation roused him. "No, my boy," he said kindly, laying his hand on Arnold's shoulder, "he cannot think that. I take the entire blame upon myself, if blame there be. But you have spoiled my little game. I was just on the point of declaring the author when you came in. I must go now and explain the matter, or he will believe that we are all in league against him;" and he also quitted the room.

Arnold stood at the window, struggling with mingled feelings of wounded pride, irritation, and resentment. Wallraf, one of the greatest critics of the day, had openly pronounced his trio *crude*, with the further implication that its author was no artist! Mala slipped her arm within his, and whispered, with tears in her eyes, "Don't mind Wallraf, Arnold; he is a bear; everybody else is charmed with your trio;" but Mala was powerless to heal the sore.

"Come, Müller," said the good-natured Schenk, who had a secret liking for Arnold, "sit down to the piano, and let us hear the *Adagio*—we are all impatience for it. You must not be disconcerted by Wallraf—there is no fathoming him. If your trio had been crude, he would not have taken the trouble to finish the first movement. I have seen him stop at a second phrase, and pitch the music across the room. So, that he has played your work, is, after all, the highest compliment he could have paid you. Come!"

But, although the violinist and all present joined in the request, Arnold's discomposure prevented his mastering himself sufficiently to comply with it. Wallraf did not return, and the evening wore away in an uncomfortable manner. When all had gone, the Director called him into his study. "Arnold," he began gravely, "I think it only due to you to explain Wallraf's conduct. I, who know him well,

can easily account for what must seem to you very harsh treatment."

Arnold was still smarting: "I don't wish to hear any explanation of Wallraf's conduct, Herr Director," he said; "I will never speak to him again so long as I live; and whatever he chooses to say is perfectly indifferent to me now. I declare honestly that I have done my best to conciliate him. To please you, Herr Director, I have submitted to insults, which, under other circumstances, would have been differently received. But now I will endure it no longer; you cannot ask me to do so. From this day, Wallraf shall see with whom he has to deal! He evidently thinks me utterly devoid of spirit and courage—willing to give up every trace of independence for the sake of gaining a smile from him,—but he shall see!—he shall see!"

"You have great reason to feel hot about it, Arnold. Last time we spoke together on the subject I thought there were faults on both sides; but since then you have not given the slightest provocation, and I freely admit that this unpleasantness is of his seeking, not yours. What I ask you to do now is to be generous enough to forget all that has passed, and learn to know Wallraf by my knowledge of him."

Arnold made no reply, but his hard breathing and excited look warned the Director that it would be no easy task to effect a reconciliation.

"In the first place," he began, "Wallraf has not always enjoyed the easy circumstances in which you now see him. Of noble birth, and surrounded in his most impressionable years by every luxury, he suddenly awoke to the discovery that his possessions were a myth—his only fortune an empty title. It would not serve my purpose to relate how this happened; that is Wallraf's affair, and perhaps some day he may himself tell you his history. In the meantime, you must take my word for it, that the change arose from no fault of his; circumstances over which he had no control reduced him at once to poverty. He was quite a young man—not yet twenty, and he resolved to retrieve his fortune; but he had neither any profession nor the means of fitting himself to enter one. In this dilemma he applied to me. I was also a young man then, though considerably older than he, and Professor at S——. I knew his love for music, and his indomitable perseverance; and accordingly offered my help, should he resolve upon devoting himself to the art. You know the result; the world knows it. I take no credit to myself for assisting him; Wallraf is a man who would have made his way had he been obliged to fight for every inch of ground; and all the share I have in his present prosperity is that I first recognised his talent, and put him in the right way to develop it. How he lived during his student-years God alone knows; he never accepted help from

mortal man; and the proceeds of a few ill-paid lessons were his only means of subsistence. I say *ill-paid*, for Wallraf had neither the manner nor the patience to make a successful teacher, and he was as irritable and morose in the days when a white loaf seemed a banquet to him as he is now. Time went on; he began to be known; he visited other countries, and returned after a few years with his hard-won laurels, and, what was of more importance, with a handsome competence. He settled here in order to be near me. Well, Arnold, here you have a man bitterly disappointed in youth, bravely struggling against reverses, and ultimately reaching his aim by single, well-directed effort. Is he not entitled to your respect?"

"I never said that I had no respect for Wallraf."

"Perhaps not; but this is the first point in my argument. In the second place, an event happened which soured his entire nature, and made him more misanthropic than even his loss of fortune. *That* a man may endure, but a broken heart who can bear? He was betrothed to my youngest sister: she behaved very badly to him, broke off the engagement at the last moment, and married the Frenchman Descroix, Lucien's father! Now you have the cause of his morbid hatred against the French.—I cannot think of Wallraf's failings otherwise than with tenderness," continued the Director, after a pause, "for most of them are due to Maria's heartlessness.

Now I come to my third point, and that affects more closely his relation to you. Wallraf is a disappointed man, not only in his fortune and his love, but also in himself."

"In himself!" echoed Arnold, with astonishment; "surely the position he has attained is sufficiently gratifying even to *his* pride?"

"Not satisfied with being one of the greatest pianists that this age or any other has produced, he will also be a *composer*. Nature, unfortunately, has been cruel, and denied him the gift he covets most."

"But Wallraf composes," said Arnold, astounded at the revelation of this undreamt-of feature in his adversary's character.

"He composes; true—but how? His works have no living value; there is no original thought in them—no body; they are like garments made solely of fringes," said the Director, unconsciously applying to another use the simile employed long before by old Jeremy Taylor; "they are mere brilliant technical displays for his own instrument. And no one feels their deficiency more than himself. Judge now, Arnold, whether this is not galling to a man like Wallraf! Think of the delight you have in expressing your own ideas: would you exchange it for the greatest power in reproducing those of others? Would you not feel that, if you were debarred from working out your own thoughts, the sunshine had departed from your life?"

This presentation of Wallraf was so novel to Arnold, that he remained for some time in silent amazement—the great pianist had hitherto appeared to him in the light of one so exalted above others, both in ability and in the conscious possession of it, that humility and self-dissatisfaction were the last sentiments he would have been inclined to attribute to him.

"Wallraf has often declared to me," continued Herr Bergmann, "that if he could but evoke from his own consciousness one single original conception, he would be a great composer. And this is no vain boast. I quite believe in it. The solitary spontaneous flash would have been to him what the first glittering sand on the bed of a river is to the gold-seeker. He would have followed up his discovery—no toil, no energy on his part, would have been wanting to produce metal of the true ring.—Is it not extraordinary how partial Nature is in her gifts?" continued the Director, meditatively. "Hundreds waste in ignorance and indolence what would be a mine of wealth to Wallraf.—His writings, on the other hand, display no want of originality. His critiques are as fresh and far-reaching in thought, as they are terse and vigorous in expression. He never puts pen to paper until he is thoroughly master of his subject; and his acquaintance with not only all styles of music, both ancient and modern, but with much that lies nominally beyond the pale of art, leads him to take a

much wider range and a broader view than the majority of critics. Men such as Wallraf put composers on their mettle. Nothing has ever baffled his earnestness and determination except this unavailing pursuit of musical ideas. He has come at length to see the futility of continuing the struggle; but what he suffered while it lasted, no one knows except myself. You too can form a faint notion of it, and I rely on your discretion, Arnold."

"You may, Herr Bergmann," returned Arnold, warmly. "Poor Wallraf! It is impossible to bear him any grudge now. But still, you must forgive my saying that this does not explain why he should have taken so violent a dislike to me. I never offended any of his prejudices."

"Not wittingly; but I once heard you maintain with great heat, that no man could be an *artist* who was not also a *composer*. You threw down the gauntlet, in fact; for you argued the point with such tenacity that Wallraf's conscientiousness, or his pride, forced him to take it up. He is no composer; but would you say that for this reason he is no artist?"

"What a fool I have been not to have discovered this before!" said Arnold, regretfully, as numerous contests of the same kind recurred to memory, in which he had held his ground with an obstinacy that would have given way at once had he sus-

pected Wallraf's reason for taking the other side.
 "I wish I had known this earlier."

"I should not have felt justified in saying so much to you had not Wallraf's own conduct imperatively demanded it; but now you can make allowance for much that was previously unaccountable. You know what Goethe says: 'a talent is formed in seclusion; a character in the world-stream.' Wallraf's retired life has brought his talent to the highest possible perfection; but it has left his character one-sided. He is irritable, suspicious, distrustful of others. From your unfortunate remarks he evidently imagined that you had penetrated into his secret—his striving, and his failure; and accordingly he looked upon you as a presumptuous young man, glorying in your own special gift, and determined to make him feel the want of it."

"Dear Director," said Arnold, "you know that I never harboured one such thought regarding Wallraf. How shall I undeceive him?"

"Wallraf will probably make the first overtures to you now. In reality, there is not a trace of little-mindedness in him. We had a long conversation about you this evening, and I think I have been able to blow away most of the cobwebs from his brain. So, after all, good has resulted from this *fracas*, and I shall yet see you friends. He will probably ask you to be his pupil, to make amends for his former shabbiness. You will not repulse him?"

"I? Certainly not. Even if he do not make peace, I shall take care to let him see that I bear no malice; and that all his suspicions regarding me are purely imaginary," and with a hearty grasp of the hand they separated.

The Director's supposition that Wallraf would be the first to make advances proved correct. Next morning, Sunday, as Arnold sat alone in his little study, apparently reading—in reality pondering over what he had heard the previous evening—the door suddenly opened, and the subject of his thoughts entered.

"Arnold," said he, frankly, "you see me here to apologize for the hasty words of last night. It is not often that I do this sort of thing; but from what I have since learned, I see that I have been labouring all along under a misapprehension with regard to you. I alone am to blame, and I regret it exceedingly. Do you consider this explanation sufficient?"

"More than sufficient," returned Arnold, as he cordially accepted the hand held out to him for the first time in friendship. "I too regret that Herr Bergmann should have shown you my trio. I never thought it worthy of your notice. He did it without my knowledge or consent."

"Don't disparage your trio," said Wallraf, with a smile. "Let me see; what did I say about it? That it was too crude to be the work of an artist? That condemnation was certainly sweeping, and I can

honestly retract part of it. It is crude, but don't be disheartened on that account; so is every first attempt. On the other hand, it *is* the work of an artist and a very promising young artist too. When it is published, you may rely on my enlightening the world as to its merits in the *Art Review*."

This praise more than atoned in Arnold's eyes for all the rough usage he had experienced at Wallraf's hands, and the latter could not but acknowledge, as he noted the glow of pleasure called forth by his words, that he had been entirely mistaken in his estimate of Arnold—that the young man looked up to him personally with a feeling the reverse of any arising from self-complacent mental contrast.

From that hour the Director saw his wish realized: they were the best friends in the world. Wallraf's barndoor similes for Arnold became a thing of the past, and he treated him like a younger brother.

Book the Second.

CHAPTER IX.

ILMINGTON RECTORY.

CIRCUMSTANCES now compel us to visit England, in order that we may see what is passing there; and as we shall be obliged to cross the Channel more than once in the course of this story, we feel ourselves bound to confess the fact at the outset to the reader; so that he may either be warned in time of the fate awaiting him, or console himself by the assurance that we shall do our best to render the transit as smooth as possible.

Ilmington Rectory was one of the quaintest parsonages in England. It would not have taken the eye of any one fond of the modern school of domestic architecture; still less would it have delighted a connoisseur versed in the details of any particular style; for, to tell the truth, the building was an odd jumble of all styles.

On one side, the Old English, with its projecting upper floor, stared you in the face; did you but turn the corner, you might fancy yourself confronted by a Gothic chapter-house, though, for some reason best

known to himself, the designer had left out the mullions in the broad arched window.

The Rectory, in fact, was a standing monument of the growth of the Chesney clerical branch during a period of more than two hundred years. Originally a small cottage, whose inmates sought no better accommodation than was afforded by its one *étage*, it had gradually lengthened, broadened, heightened—increased in size in every way, until the primitive Rectory found itself very much in the position of the glass bottle from which the Efreet escapes, in the Arabian tale. Once ample enough to act as the dwelling-house of the Genius, it degenerated into the receptacle for a minimum of the refreshment necessary for the cavernous throat of its late prisoner; nay, if we remember aright, was immediately kicked into the sea by him whose mind had risen above its fettering circumstances!

The old house had not been thus ungratefully treated by the Spirit of Progress. It had not been pulled down; but what sufficed for the Rector of Ilmington in the days when the parish Priest was toady-in-general to the parish Squire, and was content thankfully to partake of broad beans and bacon below the salt, while Dame Joan, the partner of his sorrows, formerly lady's maid to the family, remained at home and ate the beans *minus* the bacon—would have been despised by the meanest lacquey among the pampered menials of the present Rector. If we

mistake not, it served in his day as larder; though, doubtless, by this time its degradation is still more complete, and audacious cooks have pronounced it fit only for the stowage of lumber!

It was easy enough to trace the gradual addition of its heterogeneous elements in the advancing demands of civilization. First, new bedrooms would lie down on the top of the old one; they could no longer huddle together like cattle after mail coaches had opened up the chance of visitors from other parts—of a dean with an investigating turn of mind, who liked to inquire into the condition of the rural population, and naturally expected to be provided with a bed at the Rectory.

Then Madam Angelina, in powder and patches (altogether a more genteel personage than Dame Joan in russet gown and hobnail shoes), would intimate her objection to dine in the kitchen, and being possessed of a little money in her own right, would succeed in getting, not only a dining-room, but also a withdrawing-room, the rival on a small scale of that at the Place; while the accumulation of theological pamphlets and political squibs would suggest a library to her husband. Naturally, kitchens and offices would follow suit, for with growing wealth lentils no longer form the chief item in the ecclesiastical diet. The Red Indian may find his raw buffalo-steak serve the purpose of keeping soul and body together, but the march of ideas

brings in its wake those relating to taste and digestion !

Thus, by degrees, the old Rectory would attain its present swollen magnitude, not unlike that of the Frog which aimed at being an Ox ; and, as we have said, to those who have a fancy for an old-fashioned country house with its queer low-ceiled roofs ; heavy diamond-paned casements ; doors that, when shut, baffle all attempts of the stranger to distinguish them from the wall on either side ; curious locks, which have the faculty of turning only one way, and that always to play the part of jailer ; odd recesses, that seem made for the reception of domestic altars—immense oaken chests, sacred to the distaff and the spindle ; unforeseen flights of two or three steps, which cost the unwary many a sprained ankle ; unearthly subterranean vaults, supplied here and there with yawning chasms, supposed to be cooking places, but which most assuredly never cooked anything smaller than an ox ;—to such as revel in these out-of-the-way luxuries, we repeat, the Rectory would have been a paradise. But the exterior, with its gables, its ungainly chimney-stacks, its mingling of Saxon, Norman, and Greek (!) architecture, would have driven Welby Pugin distracted.

Naturally, in the eyes of Mr. Chesney and his family, no place on earth possessed a charm equal to that of the old house ; and one great interest of the Rector's life consisted in adding his quota to the

general confusion, and in keeping up the grounds in the high state of culture for which they had so long and deservedly been famed. There was a tradition in the family that Evelyn, of sylvan memory, had had a share in laying them out, together with those at the Place, from which they were separated by no boundary line; and there may be some truth in this, since the grand old oaks and clumps of beeches in the park had evidently been planted by a hand guided by a discriminating eye.

The dining-room was of immense size, running from front to back of the house; but, like everything else, it seemed out of proportion, neither its height nor its breadth corresponding to its length. Nevertheless, seen on a winter's evening, when one of poor Walter's longed-for faggot pyramids crackled on the wide hearth, casting a ruddy glow over the dark oak walls, and lighting up the faces of a group of merry young people intent on charades or *tableaux-vivans* (amusements for which Mrs. Chesney had specially provided partitioning curtains), it must have been what all unanimously declared it to be, "the most genial of rooms."

Now, however, on this August morning when we first make its acquaintance, it looks gloomy and comfortless enough. The fireplace is filled with green fir-boughs; the great dining-tables turned up against the wall, bright with half a century's rubbing ("real elbow-grease, none of your French polish," as

Mrs. Marsden would inform you with pardonable pride), wear a cold, inhospitable air; and the eye instinctively seeks relief in the two windows, the only cheering objects in the room. At that towards the back the sun is slanting in, and, astonished that he should enter so dark a region, the roses peep with him round the corner to find out in what the attraction consists, while the bees, having stolen all the sweetness to be extracted from them, direct their humming course down the hall to the other window, with a presentiment that there also honey is to be gained, for there blooms a flower of a rarer kind.

Entering by the second door (that next to the kitchens, and kept open for the convenience of the servants, the other being reserved for high days and holidays), and advancing up the long room, a stranger would be disposed to pause and admire the graceful picture in the west window—the slender, elegant figure of Alice Chesney bending over her desk, the sable folds of her mourning dress sweeping the ground with the symmetry of carefully-arranged drapery. When he had come a little closer, he might possibly be disappointed that figure and face were not more in harmony—the stern brow and compressed lips which Alice had inherited from her father might seem to him diametrically opposed to the gentle feminine bust; but did he take the last step, and engage the young girl in conversation—watch the animated expression of the intellectual features, the

dewy light of the soft eyes, and the dimples that played about the mouth—he would doubtless arrive at the conclusion that Alice Chesney was charming.

Beauty, strictly speaking, she had none; fascination, that throws a glamour over the understanding and bewitches common sense, could never be hers—he that loved Alice would do so with brain and intelligence, or not at all; the power of captivating mind and heart at will that unconsciously belonged to Mala, Alice could never hope to possess, since it was not natural to her; nevertheless, as we have said, she was charming. And “in what then did the charm consist?” asks some one.

Allow us, dear reader, to put another question in return—When you are walking in an old-fashioned garden, inhaling the fragrance of beds of mignonette, do you stop, before enjoying the perfume, to analyze the pale, insignificant flower that has given it birth?

It was Alice's custom (as it had been her mother's) to seat herself in the west window directly after breakfast, with her work or desk, that she might be within call should her father summon her to his side—not to consult her, or ask her opinion on any point, for Mr. Chesney never consulted any one, except, occasionally, old John the coachman, who passed in his master's eyes for a domestic oracle, and who could always give a judgment worth hearing, whether the topic in question were the proper treatment of a horse for spavin, or the best mode of

grafting apples—Alice knew that she was expected to act the part of Echo, approve what her father approved, and admire what he admired ; but she felt grateful for being permitted to express her interest even in this humble degree.

John was not with the Rector this morning, evidently ; and a smile stole over Alice's face, as she heard Mr. Chesney rating one of the under-gardeners—a stupid-looking, gawkyish lad—on the condition of the paths ; bidding him remove the leaves that emitted “so pestilential an effluvia,” and lose no time in “eradicating” the weeds.

“Dear papa !” thought Alice ; “I wonder if he supposes that Tom understands one-half of his directions !”

Having finished her letter, she drew from her pocket one received that morning. It seemed to produce in her mingled feelings ; for at first she smiled, but towards its close a cloud of uneasiness settled on her brow. We glance over her shoulder and read :—

“My uncle's idea of the ‘strolling player’ is perfectly absurd. I only wish I had known Müller all the time I have been here. I should have turned out a different sort of chap. He reminds me very much of dear Walter. (You need not repeat this to the Rector, who, of course, would consider it sacrilege ; nevertheless, it is true.) Fräulein Bergmann is the prettiest girl I ever saw, *except one* ; but do not be

alarmed on my account, as I would not poach on any other man's preserves for the world. By the way, tell your father that Frank knows Herr Bergmann well."

"When *will* Robert learn prudence!" thought Alice, as she put away the letter with a sigh; "he might have written that to me on a separate sheet. He knows that papa expects to see all his letters. How shall I summon up courage to show it to him! I suppose Arnold is engaged to this Mala," and another little sigh escaped.

Alice was but eighteen, and the element of joy seemed to have departed from her life. It was only natural therefore that Robert's glowing account of the sunny German household—the genial Director, his odd kind-hearted sister, the wilful pet, and the striving Arnold—should suggest a comparison with her own gloomy home. Poor Alice daily made the painful experience that she could never replace Walter in her father's affections. The Rector's manner to her was kind—for him, tender even; but did she attempt to cross a certain boundary line (invisible, but none the less palpable and stringent), she found cause to shrink with bitter regret into herself, and to confess with humiliation that she had not discovered the way to his heart.

Could she have invented some aim for her life, some means of employing her energies satisfactorily, Alice would not have bemoaned this so deeply. For the

last three years her time and thoughts had been constantly occupied by Walter; the thousand and one little things that loving hands alone can perform had been done by her in a way that none but the invalid appreciated; and now that he was gone, the interest of life seemed to have vanished also. Alice did not give way without a struggle to the sorrowful listlessness that took possession of her at times; she visited the cottages, heard the school children recite, and made jelly under Mrs. Marsden's directions, that she might learn to be a Lady Bountiful, like her mother—all to no avail. With Mariana, although from a different cause, she cried, "I am aweary!" She was essential to nobody's happiness now; her father would not have cared much if she, like Walter, had been taken; nay, she was often disposed to wish that she had been the one to go.

Parish work was a failure. Mr. Chesney had been fortunate in the clergyman who represented him during his absence, and the routine went on like clockwork—nothing out of gear, nothing that could be improved upon. There were no abject poor to be raised; very few sick to be ministered unto; no naughty children even to be reprimanded or cajoled into propriety by the prospect of a reward from the Rector's daughter; for in this Utopia the village schoolmistress was a highly-certificated young woman, with no small idea of her own capabilities, and therefore not at all inclined to smile upon any

attempt at interference on the part of the young lady. Thus, Alice was thrown completely upon her own resources, and never before had she found them fail her ; but, as she often asked herself, sadly enough, what object would be gained by pursuing any study or keeping up any accomplishment, when it afforded no pleasure to her father, and made her of no more use in the world ? In her position, some young ladies of a sentimental turn would have thrown out their energies on domestic pets, and made an idol of a lapdog ; but Alice was not frivolous.

If there had been but *one* individual on earth to whom she was indispensable—to whom she could cling, as she had done to Walter !—In short, Alice was a girl of a thoroughly practical, loving nature, silently, but surely, drifting into morbidity for want of fixed moorings, or, rather, for lack of a definite harbour to which her course should be directed, and the fresh breeze of Hope to speed her on her way.

We are all very apt to criticise the useless lives led by so many women—why were their slumbering energies not roused and stimulated in youth ? The idle hours of young ladyhood—from the time a girl leaves school until she assumes the place of the married woman—are often a curse to her whole subsequent career. Will not the best iron rust in inaction ?—the finest wood rot in a stagnant pool ?

But it may be asked, why did she not seek a friend among the families of the neighbourhood ? In the

first place, all society was tabooed for six months ; in the second, Alice did not feel particularly attracted towards any young person of her own age whom she had seen as yet. They might improve upon acquaintance ; but she who had been Walter's friend could not immediately sympathize with young ladies whose ideas had no wider range than the last *mode* in bonnets, Claribel's latest *sweet* song, and the dresses they meant to wear at the next county ball !

As the long summer days dawned, brightened, and faded, Alice's sense of isolation became more keen, and the yearning for the return of one friend—one who had been her mother's friend—more intense ; but *she* was thousands of miles away, and longing seemed in vain.

The reader has now some idea of the frame of mind in which Alice sat at her embroidery, occupied with her weary thoughts, and trying to banish them if her father's step approached the window. Suddenly, another sound struck upon her ear—that of wheels ; and in a moment a low basket-carriage, driven by a lady, passed rapidly by her, and stopped at the front entrance. Before she had time to wonder who the early visitor might be (for it was not yet ten o'clock), she saw the lower door gently open (evidently, then, some one familiar with the house), and the new-comer advancing up the long room. One glance was sufficient. With a cry of joy, Alice cast her work on the ground, and flung

herself into the motherly arms that opened to receive her.

"Dear Lady Charleswood!" "My Alice!" was all that either said; emotion prevented speech.

Lady Charleswood was the first to recover herself: "Your poor father," she said, "how is he?"

"This has been a dreadful blow to him—you will find him greatly changed. But, tell me, when did you arrive? I did not even know that you were expected home, and now I can hardly realize that you are here. Oh! dear Lady Charleswood, how many, many times I have longed for you lately! I used to think, that if I could but see your dear face and hear your voice, everything would be easier to bear."

"What has *your* longing been to *mine*, Alice!" returned Lady Charleswood with a sigh; "but now that we are once more together, nothing shall ever separate us."

Alice placed her friend in the chair she had been occupying, and seated herself on a low stool by her side. "This is like old times," she said, smiling through her tears.

"Dear child," said Lady Charleswood, passing her hand caressingly over the soft brown hair, "I thought I should find you here in your mother's place, in the old room. How you remind me of her!"

"Do I?" said Alice; and a pleased smile flitted

across her face, to be followed by a cloud, as she added, "Papa says I am not at all like her, and it vexes him."

"You have your mother's eyes, and her expression; the rest of your face is unmistakably *Chesney*."

"Have you been long in England?"

"We arrived at Southampton only yesterday morning, and I came straight on here. My impatience would not let me accompany Henry to London."

"And you came to us first—before any one else? Dear Lady Charleswood, how very kind!"

"My darling! where should I have gone first, if not to you? My heart has been with you all, during these three weary years. When your telegram arrived with the sad news of dear Walter, I urged upon Henry to return at once to England. He had not intended doing so before Christmas, but he let me have my way. His mission was at an end: we had nothing to detain us in the East, and he saw how anxious I was to get back to England—just as anxious as I had been to quit it."

"Anxious to quit dear old England, Lady Charleswood?"

"Yes," said her ladyship briefly. "After your mother's death, when you had all gone abroad, England was no longer a home to me. But rise, my darling!" she continued, "and let me have what I call 'a good look' at you. My eyes have so

long ached for the sight, that I must feast them now."

Alice smilingly complied, and submitted to be inspected as if she had been a revolving wax puppet.

"I can scarcely believe it is the same little Alice, who has so often fallen asleep in my arms. You have your mother's figure."

"Will you tell papa that?" said Alice, hesitatingly, "it might please him. I do not think he has noticed it, and he is so disappointed that I have not mamma's features."

"He was passionately fond of poor Mary; but I think *she* would have preferred to see you as you are."

The Rector's step was heard coming rapidly along the gravel path, and in a few moments his tall figure appeared in the French window. He is, as Alice says, greatly changed. A slight stoop is perceptible in the upright carriage, and the raven hair is iron grey. At the sight of the well-remembered face, Mr. Chesney's firmness nearly deserted him; he grasped the outstretched hand, and strove to utter a welcome, but no sound was audible.

"My dear old friend," said Lady Charleswood, with almost equal agitation, "the hand of God has been heavy upon you."

Recovering himself by an effort, Mr. Chesney said, "It has made me an old man before my time. This is very good of you, Lucy. I noticed your

arrival in the evening paper. Is Henry with you?"

"No, he was obliged to go to town on business connected with this diplomatic affair; but I could not wait; every hour seemed to me a day that kept me away from you and Alice."

"You are not to leave England again, I hope?"

"Oh, no! Henry will not find The Cedars dull now that you are at home; and as for me, I shall have my Alice," and she drew the girl closer to her.

A long conversation ensued—on Walter's death, their foreign residence, Lord Charleswood's mission, and the many other topics naturally interesting to those who have been long separated. There was much to tell and to hear on both sides.

As she sits thus, we can glance unobserved at the friend to whom Alice's thoughts had so often gone forth, and whom she had so unexpectedly regained. Lady Charleswood's countenance was precisely that to inspire a young, simple-minded girl like Alice with an affection amounting almost to enthusiasm. Her contour of face belonged to the rare, devotional type which the painters have accustomed us to associate with the Madonna—not the happy young mother, beaming upon the holy Child in her lap with the half awe-struck, half delighted expression of the wondering peasant, but the Madonna di San Sisto, the Mater Dolorosa—the Mary who has learned in the agony of dark hours the mystery of that sword

which pierced her, as she stood beneath the Cross. In the calmness of the noble brow, the beseeching pathos of the dark eye, the tremulous sweetness of the beautiful mouth—an observant spectator would read unfailing traces of a conflict, and of a victory. Although still in the prime of life, her hair was snow-white, and this doubtless enhanced the general impression of suffering that remained upon the mind. Her manner was dignified, but retiring; she seemed desirous of escaping observation, and spoke in a low, sweet-toned voice.

Towards the close of the conversation Mr. Chesney several times looked at his daughter as though he found her presence irksome to him. Generally, Alice would not have been slow to take the hint; but on this occasion, in the delight of her new-found joy, she did not heed it. At last he said, "You look pale, Alice; a little fresh air would do you good."

Lady Charleswood glanced with tenderness at the fair young face: "Do not send her away from me yet, Stephen; I shall have to go, immediately."

Mr. Chesney said nothing. Alice knew her father, and rose: "I will not say good-bye, dear Lady Charleswood," she whispered, as she stooped to kiss her; "I shall be in the fernery by the lodge."

Lady Charleswood pressed her hand, and Alice

stepped out into the garden, almost bewildered by the suddenness of the happiness that had thus opened up to her. As her light figure disappeared, Lady Charleswood launched out into praises of her favourite : "It is very seldom," she concluded, "that a girl deprived of her mother's care develops so well as Alice has done."

"She has to thank Walter for everything," replied the Rector; "he has made her what she is. She had masters, of course, for accomplishments; but he directed her reading, and, in fact, the greatest pleasure of his long illness consisted in going over his own student-days again with her."

"She is very like dear Mary."

"Alice will never resemble her mother," said Mr. Chesney, emphatically; "she has neither her tact nor her fine perception."

Lady Charleswood smiled: "Dear Stephen, you surely do not expect, in a girl of eighteen, that knowledge of human nature which some women do not possess at forty?"

"Walter had it," replied the Rector, dryly; "Alice is more like Robert. But what can one look for in a girl who has led for three years the erratic, unsettled life we were obliged to adopt! She has had no female friend to exert an influence over her, and thus she has become harder and more masculine than is becoming in a woman." (Poor Alice! this is turning the tables indeed! your timidity is *hard-*

ness, and your brave heart masculine!) "But now that *you* are beside her," continued the Rector, raising the lady's hand with old-fashioned gallantry to his lips, "I hope to see some of your softness infused into her."

"She is Mary's child," said Lady Charleswood, simply; "and had she the worst disposition in the world, I should still love her for that reason. But I must say that I think you judge her harshly. Lenity was never one of your failings, you know, Stephen; and there is a simplicity about my darling that I find very charming. Still, I shall make a point of trying to discover the defects you allude to. You must let her come to me as often as you can possibly spare her."

"Ah!" said Mr. Chesney, with the uneasy air of a man who has a difficult task before him and does not know how to approach it, "my reason for sending her away just now was, that we might discuss this very subject. If Alice is to be constantly with you, dear Lucy, it cannot be on the present footing."

Lady Charleswood sat as though turned to marble, her eyes bent upon the ground, and the Rector went on: "You know my great regard for you, Lucy—you were Mary's friend—there is no one on earth whose influence I should value more for my child than yours—no one, except her mother, whom I should more wish her to resemble. I need not

assure you of all this—I have given you the strongest possible proof of my confidence by appointing you, in conjunction with Henry, her guardian, should anything happen to me. Nevertheless, much as it pains me to say it, if there is to be this intimacy between you and Alice—she must know all.”

During this speech, brought out slowly and with great difficulty by Mr. Chesney, the colour had gradually faded from Lady Charleswood’s face, her lips become bloodless, and the peaceful light of her eye replaced by a strange dull gleam of mingled apprehension and fear. For some moments she sat motionless, stunned by the blow that had thus unexpectedly fallen upon her. “Stephen,” she said at length, in a hoarse voice that no effort could raise beyond a whisper, “if you take her from me, I shall die.”

“This will not rob you of Alice,” said the Rector, gently; “she is warmly attached to you, and she is a sensible girl.”

Lady Charleswood shook her head faintly, and the despairing expression settled itself more visibly.

“Alice is but a child; how can she realize my position? She has keen feelings—it is impossible she can love one in whom she has no faith. She will hate me—despise me.—Leave me Alice, Stephen!” she cried, with a passionate outburst, sinking on her knees, and looking imploringly at

him, while the great tears coursed each other down her beautiful face—"leave me this one innocent girl! Had it pleased God to grant me a child of my own, I should not have been obliged to kneel to you. Have I not suffered, Stephen? God knows that I was more sinned against than sinning. Must my crime, if it *were* a crime, still bear fruit after five-and-twenty years—five-and-twenty long years, Stephen! Have you not a heart? You do not know what it is to a woman to feel that *one*, at least, believes in her—that one of her own sex does not turn from her with loathing."

"Lucy!" interrupted the Rector, gravely, as he assisted her to rise, "this attitude befits neither you nor me. God knows, I would spare you if I could. Calm yourself, and listen to reason. It is my very anxiety to preserve your friendship for Alice that urges me to take this step. Reflect!—whether is it better that she should learn your story from yourself, or that she should hear it with all the embellishments of vulgar gossip and slander? Hear it she will, in some way. She is no longer a child; she must go into society. And this thing was not done in a corner; it is known—partially known—to every one. Is it not better that she should hear the *truth* of the matter—know you as *I* know you—as Mary knew you?"

"Mary promised that Alice should never be told of it," pleaded Lady Charleswood.

"If her mother had lived, there would have been no occasion for it; but the case is altered now. I cannot be always by her side to shield her from the false, poisoning words that will reach her ear."

"Surely—surely it is forgotten now, Stephen! It cannot be fresh in people's memories!"

"I heard a garbled version of your story discussed yesterday by two gentlemen, both strangers to me," said the Rector, gravely.

"Then, God help me!" murmured the unhappy lady. "If He take from me my last comfort, I must submit. But oh! Stephen, you are a hard man! you crush my only hope remorselessly beneath your heel."

"Lucy," said the Rector gently—he who in general was impatient of the slightest contradiction, bore, with the tenderness of a woman the irritation of this poor, stricken heart—"I am confident that this step will bring forth nothing but good. Will *you* tell Alice?"

"I?" and with a shudder that convulsed her whole frame, Lady Charleswood rose from her chair, and, drawing her veil over her face, gave her hand to the Rector without speaking, and left the room.

CHAPTER X.

DE PROFUNDIS.

THE Rector remained for some minutes in painful perplexity. The task which devolved upon him grew more and more difficult the nearer it approached, and when at length he saw Alice coming up the lawn he walked quickly to the farther door, as though he dared not stay to answer her inquiries—to explain what could no longer be concealed; and then, ashamed of his momentary weakness, returned to his former place.

“Papa!” exclaimed Alice, breathless with anxiety, “Lady Charleswood is gone! I heard the sound of her chaise in the fernery, and ran out to say ‘good bye;’ but she appeared not to notice me, and drove straight through the gate. Is anything wrong? Has anything happened?”

“Alice, my dear,” began Mr. Chesney, nervously, “sit down quietly. I have something to tell you.”

Alice obeyed, not without a trembling presentiment that in some mysterious way her new happiness was about to be taken from her. For some minutes she awaited the news in silent suspense, for

now that he actually had his daughter before his eyes, and knew that he was about to undermine one of the strongest affections of her young life, Mr. Chesney felt himself unequal to the work, and paced the room, in the faint hope that delay would add strength to his courage. At length, unable to endure the silence, Alice said, "What is it, papa? You need not fear to tell me; I can bear it."

Mr. Chesney glanced at her colourless face with a foreboding that she had not much force to resist a shock; but "now or never it must be," he thought, and plunged into his communication at once.

"Alice," he began, hesitatingly, "a long time ago, there was a young girl—younger than you—married to a man much older than herself, who treated her unkindly—so unkindly that she resolved to run away from him. No one could blame her for that; but unfortunately, Alice, when she left her husband, she was not alone—one who had urged her to take the fatal step accompanied her. She fled with the partner of her guilt." (Mr. Chesney felt himself using the customary platitudes against his own conviction; in his heart of hearts he did not condemn—but he thought it necessary for Alice's sake to moralize.) "Lucy fled—I see you know to whom I refer; and—and—that very night,—Alice! are you listening?"

Alice knew too well to whom her father referred; her hand relaxed its grasp of the apron which she

had held gathered up; the flowers she had just culled dropped upon the ground—on the very spot where Lady Charleswood had knelt but a few minutes before; and Alice herself would have fallen forward had not her father noticed the change in her countenance, and supported her with his arm. “My dear, are you ill?” he said; but Alice made no response—she had fainted. Never before had Mr. Chesney seen her similarly affected, and he was at his wit’s end, for there was no couch in the room, and he could not reach the bell.

“Marsden! Marsden!” he cried loudly; a summons which after a little delay, opening and shutting of doors, and running about of servants, brought the old housekeeper, panting, from the haste with which she had left her own domain. On ordinary occasions Mrs. Marsden’s demeanour was so leavened by a natural self-importance, and her black silk gown rustled in so stiffly portentous a manner, that it seemed almost an insult in her master to address her without the matronly prefix; but as she bustles into the dining-room now, her dignity becomes swallowed up in anxiety for her young lady, who is the very apple of her eye. Contenting herself with casting one glance of indignation at the unfortunate Rector, she banished all her aides-de-camp from the field, and applied herself to bathe Alice’s temples with eau-de-cologne.

For a time the remedy seemed ineffectual, and the

good lady's wrath burst its respectful bounds: "Lord preserve us, Mr. Stephen!" she exclaimed, in the strong Scottish accent of her girlhood, which invariably returned to her when excited, "what hae ye been sayin' to the lamb? Could ye not see that her verra heart is breakin' for lack o' her brother? —Miss Alice, honey! won't ye speak to auld Jean? I thought she was keepin' up ower bravely—There! that's my bairn!" as Alice opened her eyes, and tried to sit up. For a moment she could not understand how she came to be in her father's arms, until a sudden recollection of what had passed crept like a shudder over her.

"I think, my darling, you had better go upstairs and lie down," said the Rector, who had never realized, until he saw her in the semblance of death, how precious his one remaining child was to him. "Are you able to walk?"

"Yes, thank you, papa. Jean will give me her arm," said Alice, wearily, and proceeded to her own room, escorted by her faithful old friend, who, while attending to her comfort, poured a great deal of well-meant sympathy into her ear.

"Ye must not heed your papa so much, Miss Alice dear. I knew him long before ye were born or thought of. And take my advice: just let all he says gae in at the one ear and out at the ither. If ye are to take all his whims and camstrairy ways sae much to heart, ye'll fret yourself into a shadow.

Mr. Stephen's a braw gentleman—a grand man! but unless ye just put yourself under his verra foot there's nae doin' wi' him!"

"Papa has not been saying anything to me, Jean—at least, not in the way you mean," said Alice, faintly.

But Jean chose to draw her own conclusions, and muttered, as she drew the window-curtains preparatory to quitting the room, "I'll no stan' by, and see that lamb browbeat intil her grave!—there was enough o' that in Sir Ralph's time—for want o' somebody wi' a tongue in her heed, and as muckle o' the deil as 'll suffice to haud in the deil! If it gaes on much langer, I'll speak my mind to the master, though he suld send me adrift in my auld age for't!" and having relieved her feelings in "guid braid Scots," Mrs. Marsden subsided into intelligible Saxon and very *unintelligible* groans for the rest of the day.

Left to herself, Alice turned her face to the wall, and lay for some time in a state of mental collapse. The brave heart that during all the trying time on the Continent had kept its sorrows concealed within itself—the active mind which, when grief seemed to have deprived the Rector of the power of thought, banished its own suffering to attend to the necessary arrangements that should have been *his* care—sank now, under the weight of a new and keen pressure. "Lucy fled with the partner of her guilt"—"Lucy fled with the partner of her guilt," she

repeated to herself over and over again in a numb, torpid way, and each time the pain sank deeper. "*The partner of her guilt!*"—what might it mean? The dull sound of the great ocean of vice that seethes, and roars, and tosses in its unrest within sight of many of us, had never before struck upon her ear.

True, she knew that such a thing existed. God help us! Who can escape contamination in these days? But knowledge of evil is not necessarily familiarity with it, any more than ignorance is innocence; and, safe in her own unconscious purity, Alice had hitherto bestowed no thought upon it. Now, alas! it seemed brought very close, and the first wave threatened to overwhelm her. As the truth gradually dawned upon her, and the import of her father's words grew more apparent, Alice's bewilderment gave place to anger. The extenuating circumstances fled from her memory. The sin alone stood out in all its enormity, and Alice shrank and trembled as though she herself had had some share in the commission of it. The desolate home and the forsaken husband rose vividly before her, and with an uncontrollable burst of indignation she sprang from the sofa, and paced the room in the greatest agitation.

"And she touched me! She drew me to her bosom! She *dared* to talk to me of my mother! To take that name within her lips!—Oh, mother!

mother! help me now!" And the hot tears that accompanied this prayer did Alice good; she grew more calm, and tried to think quietly of the events of the morning. But as the image of Lady Charleswood presented itself to her imagination, and the mournful eyes seemed to look into her very soul, she cried in her agony, "I'll not believe it! I *will* not believe it! They shall never convince me that she could do that great wickedness. She was my mother's friend. Papa has heard some rumour, some vile, horrible rumour," and the thought struck her that she would go herself, and ask Lady Charleswood of its truth.

"She will not hide it from *me*," she murmured; "but what is there to hide? I shall read her innocence in those dear eyes." Alice was under the influence of strong excitement—excitement which prevented any attempt at logical inference, or she might have drawn a different conclusion from the fact of her friend's having driven away without speaking to her. "She was incensed against papa, and with reason. Dear Lady Charleswood, you shall have *one* at least to take your part!"

With nervous eagerness, Alice put on her habit, and ordered her horse to be brought round directly. "Tell William I shall not require him," she said. The maid gave the order, with the addition that in her opinion "Miss Alice was not fit to ride alone, she looked like death." Old John took the hint,

silently saddled a second horse, and when Alice was a few yards in advance, mounted and rode after her. The way lay for two miles through a very pretty country ; flat, but luxuriant in old-fashioned hedges and waving yellow corn-fields. At any other time Alice would have delighted in a canter through her beloved lanes, but to-day she had eyes for nothing, ears for nothing. She did not even notice the trotting of the horse behind, and was therefore not a little surprised when, after passing through the gloomy cedar avenue, half a mile in length, which gave its name to the house, John advanced to assist her to dismount.

"I thought I told William that I wished to be alone," Alice said, with a touch of annoyance. She did not care about her visit to The Cedars being discussed in the servants' hall.

"Beg pardon, Miss," said old John, with a deprecatory touch of the hat ; "too many tramps about in them hop-fields now, for that."

Alice made no rejoinder ; throwing her long train over her arm, she slowly ascended the broad flight of steps, and was met by the information that "Lady Charleswood was in her boudoir, and had given orders not to be disturbed."

"She will see *me*," said Alice.

"Perhaps I had better send her ladyship's maid to you ?" pursued the man, with some hesitation.

"No," said Alice ; "I shall find the way easily

myself," and she passed up the marble staircase, and through the lofty corridors she remembered so well. Four years ago, a heedless, merry child, she had traversed them, her hand in her mother's; now, a woman, with that dull gnawing pain at her heart, she was there to lift the veil from the life of one who had been her second mother; to put a question, the answer to which might sap the very foundations of her belief in all that was true and pure—for who was true, if those eyes spoke falsehood? Whom could she regard as a type of purity, if that countenance were not an index to a spotless mind?

Arrived at the boudoir-door, Alice tapped gently. there was no response; she waited a few minutes; then attempted to open it, but it was fastened from within. Recollecting that a second door opened from Lady Charleswood's bedchamber, she tried that, and found it unlocked. For a moment her heart failed her, and she stood with the handle in her hand; but summoning all her resolution to her aid, she entered the inner apartment. It was some time ere her eye became accustomed to the dim atmosphere, for the daylight was partially excluded by thick blinds, and at first she believed the room deserted. But as she advanced, the rich carpet yielding noiselessly to her light footfall, she perceived, in a recess formed by the folds of a heavy curtain, what appeared to be a mass of white drapery thrown carelessly down. It was Lady Charleswood. A kneeling-chair stood close by,

but in the agony of her devotion she had thrust it aside, and cast herself upon the ground. Alice touched her gently. Lady Charleswood started to her feet. What an alteration had the few hours of suspense produced! The Madonna was gone; in her place stood a despairing, miserable woman. On seeing Alice, she exclaimed, with a joyful cry, "Then your father has told you all?"

"*All*, Lady Charleswood!" and Alice instinctively recoiled from the arms that were extended towards her. The ray of hope faded from Lady Charleswood's face, as she continued, imploringly, "It is not true, dear Lady Charleswood? Only tell me it is not true! I will believe you, though all the world should contradict it."

"God help me, Alice, it is true!" said Lady Charleswood, in a voice that was scarcely audible, but it penetrated to ears strung to their highest pitch, and Alice sank on a chair, and put her hand to her throbbing temples.

"Hate me, Alice! Spurn me from you! You cannot hold me in greater detestation than I hold myself.—This is but *one* drop in my bitter cup," she exclaimed, rocking herself to and fro in extreme agitation. "Lord, give me strength to drink it to the dregs! What is this to all that Thou didst bear for me?" And for a moment her head sank upon her bosom.—Then she arose, with a certain return of her old dignity, and approaching Alice,

took her hand tenderly. It was immediately withdrawn.

"Do not fear that my touch will pollute you, Alice," said Lady Charleswood, mournfully. "God knows that if your purity could be purchased only at the cost of my life, I would willingly give it; ay, and more valuable things than that, were they mine to give. Alice," she continued quietly, "I have long foreseen this. It is impossible that a young girl like you should possess the great heart of your mother—should be able to separate the sin from the sinner; it is perfectly natural that you should look upon me as you do. God forbid that I should desire to escape one iota of the penalty I have brought upon myself! but, Alice, you are very precious to me, God knows how precious, both for your own sake, and for that dear saint's.—I can no longer hope to have your free love and esteem; but, perhaps, if you heard the story of my life, you would not altogether loathe me.—Listen, Alice, I will not seek to prejudice your judgment; you are acting according to your conscience. I dare say I should have done the same in your place," and she sighed heavily.

All this time Alice sat motionless, with averted face, her eyes shaded by her hand.

"My father was a solicitor in London," began Lady Charleswood, in a voice whose utter heartlessness (we use the word in another than the conventional sense) was very touching. "He had a large

family, and but a small *clientèle*. I was not the eldest daughter ; there were three girls older than I, all full of life and spirit, and distinguished in manner and appearance. I was shy and delicate, had no vivacity to play my part brilliantly, and besides, was very plain-looking. They tell me I am not so now ; but in those days my lack of beauty was the scape-goat for everybody's ill-temper. Did anything go wrong in business, my father immediately began to calculate how long I should remain a burden on him with my 'ugly face,' while my mother let no opportunity pass of reminding me that I was like none of the family, and of no possible use except to act as a foil to my sisters.

"My childhood was not a very happy one. When I was about seventeen, just a month after my birthday, I remember well, I was called one day into my father's study, and informed that one of his clients, a gentleman living on the borders of Wales, had asked me in marriage. The match was nothing very great in a worldly point of view, and would have been rejected for any of the others, but they were all delighted at it for me. 'It was not probable that I would ever have another offer,' my father said, 'what Penton saw in me passed his comprehension, but as he had taken a fancy to me, I ought to be thankful for so good a chance of settling respectably in life.' It was accordingly arranged, without much regard to my wishes, and I was directed to 'make myself agree-

able' to Mr. Penton. I had only seen him twice before, for a few minutes at a time, and I instinctively shrank from him, for he was a coarse, red-faced man, about the same age as my father, and his conversation ran wholly on hunting matters. I made several faint objections to the marriage, but they were overruled, and in fact, I was too weak in health to offer any decided resistance, besides being so unhappy at home that any change seemed desirable; and Mr. Penton appeared fond of me, and spoke more kindly to me than my brothers and sisters had ever done."

Lady Charleswood paused for a few minutes.

"I soon discovered the secret of his 'fancy' for me. Adjoining his estate was a small farm, about which a lawsuit had been pending several years, and which was finally lost by him, the successful claimant being my godfather, who died a few months after, and left the farm to me. It was not worth much—a few acres of barren, rocky ground; but Mr. Penton had set his heart upon it, and had been heard to declare, that though it should cost him all he possessed in the world, it should yet be his. He found out to whom it had passed, contrived to get introduced to my father, employed him on some trifling law business, and, when he thought his ground secure, proposed for me. Ahab won his vineyard cheaply, although, as he said, it was 'saddled' by me.

"Were I to enter minutely upon the history of

my married life, Alice, you would probably imagine that I was endeavouring to secure your sympathy, so I shall not dwell upon it more than is absolutely necessary. Mr. Penton was a man to whom no young girl ought to have been entrusted; he cared neither for my reputation nor his own; he made demands upon me with which it was utterly impossible for me to comply; and when he found he could not bend me to his will, he neglected me. For weeks at a time he would not speak to me, nor look at me with any expression except a scowl. Thus I passed two miserable years, almost alone, for we had no society except his rough companions.

At the end of that time, there came a new visitor to the house, one who in character and conduct was the very reverse of those by whom I was surrounded.—I need not say who he was.—He had met my husband while shooting on the moors, and accepted his offer of ‘dinner and a bed,’ for it was a wild country, and the houses were few and far between. He saw me, and I suppose felt sorry for me. Henry has a good heart. He perceived that his visits gave me pleasure. God knows, his was the only friendly face I had seen since my marriage. He came often, and oftener, until our friendship deepened into something more, and I awoke from my happiness with a start to find myself on the brink of a precipice. I begged him not to visit me any more, I implored him to leave me (God help me, Alice, I did!), and at

last he yielded, and went away from that part of the country.

"How I passed the next few months I do not know. My husband's temper gradually became more violent; he was irritated that he had no son—no heir; and besides, I knew that he had mixed himself up with a betting-set, and that money matters troubled him. I was in daily fear of my life, for he sought to drown his cares in intemperance, and more than once, when the fit was on him, threatened to 'make away' with me; and I had not the slightest doubt that he would be as good as his promise, for he valued me no more than one of his pointers—if so much. I wrote my mother, begging her to let me go to her on a visit, if only for a few weeks; but she sent me word in reply, that 'it was a married woman's duty to submit to her husband, and that she had no doubt, if I only tried to please Mr. Penton, things would go on more smoothly between us.'"

Lady Charleswood stopped, and a bitter smile crossed her face.

"One night, it was in March, I was sitting up for Mr. Penton. He had gone to a neighbouring fair, and I knew that he would be late, so I sent the servants to bed, and said that I would let him in myself. About one o'clock, I heard him coming, evidently with some of his companions; they dismounted, and I opened the door, hiding myself

behind it until the four had passed in. Then I put on the chain and slipped upstairs. How well do I recollect every incident of that night! After the lapse of half an hour, when everything was quiet, I ventured down again, that I might unloose my husband's cravat. I always feared his having a fit of apoplexy in his drunken sleeps. I entered the dining-room, and observed two of his comrades asleep—one on his chair, another on the floor; the third was nowhere visible. I went to my husband, who seemed also asleep, and began with trembling fingers to untie his collar; but I had come too soon; he was not sound. At my first touch he started up with an oath, and clutching a bag that lay upon the table by his side, vowed that 'no one should have his money!' When he saw who it was that had disturbed him, his rage knew no bounds—'what did I mean by wandering about like a ghost at that time of night, frightening people out of their senses? Take that—and that—for a pale-faced jade!' and he struck me several times across the face with his heavy riding-whip, till the blood came. I have the scar still. He then flung himself into his chair again, for he had evidently been drinking more than usual, and fell asleep almost instantly.

While I was stanching the blood, half stunned by the pain, I became conscious that Henry stood by me. 'Lucy,' he said, in a low voice, 'you must not stay here—that man will kill you.' I remem-

ber that I did not think his presence in the least extraordinary. I was too wretched to wonder at anything: 'Where can I go?' I said.—'Come with me!'—And I mechanically gave him my hand. 'Get your bonnet,' he said, 'and I went upstairs as if it had been a dream, put on my walking-dress, and when I returned, we left the house together.'

Lady Charleswood paused, overcome by painful emotions.

"Alice, if I had but borne a little longer, if I had had but the courage to resist Henry then, a few hours more would have set me free—to marry him. But I was dazed—stupified with grief—and how could I tell that deliverance was so near? God forbid that I should say I desired to be set free at such a price!" she added hastily, "I would not have harmed a hair of his head; but I should have been most thankful to be released from him. There was no means of obtaining a divorce in those days—at least none that I knew of. I need not dwell upon the dreadful event of that night. Your father has doubtless told you of it?"

Alice made a sign in the negative, and shrank in horror from the answer it elicited: "Mr. Penton was found dead in the morning; his throat cut, and his money gone. You may well shudder! But think, Alice! I was suspected of the deed—I! I! who never, to my knowledge, harmed a living soul, and had not some cottiers seen us on the road

about two o'clock, I should have been convicted of it ; but the medical evidence proved that the crime must have been committed in the early morning, between five and six.

" Was the murderer discovered ? " said Alice, whose strong interest in the painful narrative had gradually gained the upper hand.

" No, not to this day, although Lord Charleswood spared neither expense nor toil to bring him to justice. I have little doubt in my own mind as to the perpetrator of the act ; it must have been one of those who overheard Henry's proposal to me, whom we fancied asleep, and who immediately perceived the advantage my flight would give him in covering his guilty design. I am the more convinced of this, because, although I am positive that I saw him there that evening, it was given out that he had left the country a few days before ; and we have never been able to trace him. Suspicion naturally fell upon me. Before God, I am innocent," continued Lady Charleswood, with intense earnestness ; " innocent of every sin of which they accused me, except the one fatal step of leaving my home. But for that, I might have stood out before the world, and before you, Alice, and declared myself guiltless. That one act has followed me through all my life ; its shadow is on me now ; and, unless it please God to interpose on my behalf in a way I no longer expect, it must haunt me to my grave."

“But, dear Lady Charleswood,” said Alice, bursting into tears, “no one, surely, imagines that *you* had a share in that dreadful deed? Your innocence is fully proved?”

“My innocence was proved, Alice, fully and conclusively; but a stain such as that, once attached to a woman’s name, is not easily effaced; any one involved in such a tragedy is marked for life.—I do not wish it otherwise. God forbid! These barriers and tests form the bulwark of our English society—make it what it is—the purest on God’s earth; but oh, Alice!” continued Lady Charleswood, while the tears trickled slowly down her cheeks, “may you never realize what I have experienced! It may be natural that people should look with distrust on one who acted as I did—my own family have never forgiven me; and not many can know the circumstances that form my only excuse. Still, I cannot but think that few—few have suffered as I did for an early fault.”

When her agitation had somewhat quieted, she continued, “We went abroad for a time, and then returned, hoping that the attention the story attracted had died out; but the very first evening we discovered our mistake.—Going up the steps of a public building, I was saluted by a double epithet, which God grant your ears may never hear. I almost fainted, but Henry whispered, ‘For God’s sake,

Lucy, don't give way! think what it implies;' and for his sake I bore up, and sat out the whole of that dreadful evening, feeling the eyes of hundreds directed against me like burning glasses. I have never gone into society since.

"What more shall I tell you Alice? How shall I make you understand the blow that crushed my young life! Crushed it literally, for I no longer cared to live. Henry recovered himself far sooner than I. Naturally, what blights a woman, leaves a man unscathed. I tried to devote myself to good works," continued Lady Charleswood, "but the very poor to whom I gave in charity accepted it with a sneer and a look that said, 'Stand back! for I am holier than thou;' and at times I really began to think that I must be what they imagined, and would have given myself up to justice, had not Henry restrained me. I must have been going slowly deranged, through grief. Once I resolved to leave him, and enter some convent, where, by prayer and suffering, I might hope to avert the curse that had settled on me. But one thought held me back. I knew that if I embraced the doctrine of expiatory penance, I must also accept that of the Virgin-intercessor, and I shrank from it. They were *women* who had made me feel my degradation, Alice, not men; and what guarantee had I that she, in her Immaculate Purity, would not also turn away from me?

"While I was in the wretched frame I have tried

to describe to you, this house was left to Lord Charleswood, and we came down here. How often have I blessed God for that! It was the turning-point in my life; for here I first met your mother. What she was to me, none but the Searcher of hearts can ever know. It is her work that I am here to-day, instead of in a lunatic asylum, or in my grave. She showed me where to look for help to bear the cross, and taught me also to live above the world. Secure of her friendship and sympathy, I could easily dispense with that of others, although others too were not slow in seeking my acquaintance after she had crossed the Rubicon. The happiest years of my life were those during which she was spared to me.

"She was taken; and I found it my duty to go abroad with Lord Charleswood, instead of remaining by her children to fill her place with them, to the best of my feeble ability. But in all our wanderings, my one solace has been the thought that we should soon be united; and that to *you*, Alice, I might possibly repay, in some small degree, the debt of gratitude I owe your father and mother. It has pleased God to deprive me of this last comfort."

"No, dear Lady Charleswood!" said Alice, impetuously, throwing herself on her friend's neck, "I ask you now, not to turn away from *me*—to forgive me for my hasty judgment. I cannot live without you; next to my mother you have always been—

you are still, my best friend," and Lady Charleswood felt, as she clasped to her bosom the child she loved so passionately, and they held each other in an embrace which spoke of a deathless affection, that Mr. Chesney's judgment had been right after all, and that Alice was hers now by a new and more sacred tie—the sympathy of suffering.

CHAPTER XI.

"ONLY HIS OWN ENEMY."

THIS day was destined to be a memorable one to Alice, for another surprise awaited her. When she finally left The Cedars, the shadows were rapidly lengthening; and fearing that her father might possibly be uneasy at her prolonged absence, she made the two miles and a half of the journey home in a surprisingly short time. Arrived within the Rectory bounds, old John began to reflect that his young lady could more easily dispense with his services than he with his afternoon cup of tea, and accordingly betook himself by a short cut to the stable; while Alice gave the rein to her horse, which thereupon naturally compensated itself for its previous exertions by proceeding at its most leisurely pace.

Her mind overflowing with a quiet happiness, Alice asked herself, could it be possible that she was the same girl who had traversed the ground but a few hours before, trembling on the borders of despair? It is very probable—nay, it is certain—that through time she would have recovered the shock of finding Lady Charleswood

unworthy of her affection ; but Alice felt—and felt truly—that, had she been deprived of her friend, life would no longer have worn the same aspect for her.

Now, instead of being compelled by a most painful process to withdraw her love, she found it strengthened and ennobled by a higher purpose : the arm she had desired lay suddenly within her reach ; the duty she had longed to discharge opened out before her. Henceforth, she vowed, with all the ardent partisanship of an enthusiastic nature, Lady Charleswood should not want one to take her part firmly—if quietly—to display by deeds, if not openly by words, entire belief in her innocence. And it was this feeling (together with the insight she had had into Lady Charleswood's intense love for herself) that diffused so bright a glow over her countenance, and made her heart throb with a joy which for months had been absent from it.

Absorbed in her own thoughts, she did not observe the approach of a stranger, and was therefore not a little startled to find her horse's bridle grasped, and her progress impeded, by some one who accosted her with " Miss Chesney, I presume ? "

The events of the morning had rendered Alice somewhat nervous. John's remark about the unsafe state of the country flashed across her memory, and she perceived with alarm that the house was not yet in sight. It was some moments before she had regained sufficient composure to assure herself that

the intruder could not by any possibility belong to either a hop or a thieving gang; for he was a tall, gentlemanly man, of military bearing and good address.

"I fear I have alarmed you," he said, with a smile. "I am sincerely sorry for it; but I thought you would have known me.—Don't you remember cousin Tom, Alice? Tom Hawkesworth?"

This cousin Tom! This swarthy, moustachioed individual the slim, beardless Tom, who twelve years ago used to carry her on his shoulder, and perch her on some high place whence she could only effect her escape by paying an inordinate ransom in kisses! Impossible! and yet, at a second glance, Alice recognised the good-humoured (if somewhat vacillating) mouth, behind its hirsute embellishment; and there could be no mistake about the eyes. She gave him her hand frankly: "Yes, I remember you perfectly, cousin. I *was* a little startled at first. But, how did you know me?"

"I must have a memory worse even than it is, before I can forget my little wife! Don't you recollect, Alice, you promised to be 'grown up and ready for me' when I came back from the Cape? But to speak seriously, I should have recognised you anywhere, from your likeness to your mother."

Alice's heart gave a bound. A second person had observed the resemblance; it might yet strike her father.

"Poor aunt Mary!" pursued Captain Hawkesworth (for such was the new comer's designation), as they proceeded slowly towards the house, "she was an angel, if ever there breathed one upon this earth. I was dreadfully shocked by the news of her death. And dear Walter! But I always used to say of him as a boy, that he was 'too good to live.' How changed the old house must be! I suppose Robert is still at school?"

"He would not feel himself greatly flattered by that question," said Alice, smiling. "He is in Germany, studying at the Städtlein University. Robert is now nineteen."

"Robert nineteen! Bless my soul! how time flies! When I saw him last he was pleading very hard to be promoted to the dignity of jacket and trousers."

"Have you seen my father?"

"No. Yonder he comes; in search of you, I suppose. How wonderfully he has aged! Do not say a word, Alice; we shall see if he recognises me."

Mr. Chesney approached at a pace rather more hurried than his usual dignified tread. He had been anxious about Alice, and now that he saw her advancing—led, as he thought, by a total stranger—he immediately fancied that some accident had occurred—that she had been thrown from her horse, and that her conductor was a second edition of the

"strolling player" come to the rescue. "My dear Alice," he ejaculated, as he wiped the perspiration from his brow, "I felt sure some accident would happen, when I heard that you had gone out to-day alone! Are you at all injured?"

"Injured, papa?" replied Alice, at a loss to follow his train of thought; while her cousin said, with a laugh: "For what do you take me, then, Mr. Chesney?"

"I have not the honour of your acquaintance, sir," replied the Rector, coldly (there was a familiarity about the stranger which he did not relish); "I suppose I am indebted to you for my daughter's safe return?"

"Uncle Stephen!"—Mr. Chesney started back a pace or two in amazement,—"have you forgotten 'that scamp Tom,' the plague of your existence until he went abroad?"

"Good heavens! this cannot be Tom—Jenny's little Tom!"

"None other, I assure you. What did you imagine me to be, uncle? Some Don Whiskerando, on the point of running away with your heiress, had you not come up at the critical moment?"

The Rector had now recovered from his astonishment; he looked really pleased to see his nephew, as he shook him heartily by the hand, and welcomed him back to the old country. "Still the same old scapegrace, I see! Why did you not write and let

us know of your arrival? Is Mrs. Hawkesworth with you?"

"I left Fanny and the children in London."

"You should have brought them with you; Alice would have liked to make her new cousins' acquaintance."

"The fact is, uncle, I have merely run down to see you all, and to consult you on a matter of business. I must return to town to-night."

The Rector's brow clouded: "You cannot spare us a day or two after an absence of twelve years?"

"I am really very sorry, sir; but just now it is impossible. I cannot leave Fanny alone; she is quite a stranger to London, you know, and as ignorant as a baby of our English ways. Besides, I have business to arrange that requires my presence."

"Have you been long in England?" asked Alice.

"Only a week, cousin. You see, I have not allowed the grass to grow under my feet before looking you up!"

"Tom," said the Rector, "what time does your train go, since you *will* leave us?"

"9.45 from Tredhill; but I shall be obliged to leave this at eight o'clock, on account of the walk."

"Walk! Nonsense! we'll send you over."

"I have a friend in the village, waiting for me."

"A friend! Why did you not bring him with you? Allow me to send down for him?"

"You are very good, uncle; but it is of no use; he will not come. He is a queer fellow—an old colonist, who returned in the same vessel with us. When he heard that I intended taking a run into the country he insisted on accompanying me; said he had been so long a stranger to the old scenes. He will be perambulating the fields now, like the Wandering Jew—impossible to find him," and Captain Hawkesworth gave what seemed to his uncle a very peculiar laugh; but he did not press the point, and after telling Alice to order dinner for six instead of seven o'clock, the Rector led off his nephew to view the miraculous improvements that had taken place during his absence.

Nothing delighted Mr. Chesney more than to secure an appreciative listener, and Captain Hawkesworth was admirable in that capacity; his good-humour and his faculty for perceiving at a glance what had been effected were alike remarkable. He duly inspected the new stables, and the tower that crowned them (the whole edifice being a triumph of constructural skill in which the architect had sought to blend the incongruous elements that fought for pre-eminence in the Rectory itself); the wonderfully-enclosed little lake of clear water, that had replaced the stagnant horse-pool of former days; and the splendid new wall in the kitchen garden, now covered by trees in full bearing, and made entirely of bricks from the Rector's own private kiln. For

The price I can raise upon my commission will discharge the greater part of my liabilities ; for the remainder, my creditors have agreed to wait until brighter days dawn for me—if they ever do.”

Mr. Chesney paced the room in great perturbation.

“ But your mother’s fortune ? ” he said, making a sudden halt opposite Captain Hawkesworth.

“ Gone, sir.”

“ Your wife had money, had she not ? ”

“ She had. The larger portion is lost ; the rest is fortunately settled upon herself ; *fortunately*, I say, for, had I been able to put my hands upon it, it would have been swallowed up in the infernal pit too. She has about a hundred a year left—it will prevent her and the children from actually starving.”

The Rector continued his walk for some time, painfully agitated by what he had just learned, while his nephew endeavoured to hide his chagrin at the tale he was forced to tell under the mask of indifference: “ Tom,” said Mr. Chesney abruptly, “ you are a scoundrel—a rascally spendthrift ; ” and having relieved his feelings by this burst, he relapsed into silence, only to break out again with, “ How dare you come here, sir, and tell me with this cool impudence that you have squandered every penny of the money poor Jenny had such difficulty in securing for you ? Your father did not leave you much, I own. But with your mother’s portion you

ought to have been able to maintain the position of an officer and a gentleman for fifty years, sir, instead of twelve!"

"You do not know, uncle," began Captain Hawkesworth, "what is expected of a fellow abroad. The style of living is totally different from the English. I can assure you it takes twice as much to keep up a respectable appearance. And what is a man to do?—he cannot let himself be pooh-poohed by a lot of colonial snobs for want of a little ready money to make a dash with."

"Had your regiment been ordered to India, Tom, that excuse might have sounded feasible. But don't attempt to make me believe any such absurdity with regard to those new stations. Where have you passed the twelve years—first at the Cape, then in New Zealand?"

"Yes," said Captain Hawkesworth sulkily. Long habit had rendered him deferential to his uncle, who had been his guardian, as he was Robert's; but he mentally rebelled against the catechetical tone the Rector had suddenly assumed.

"Both colonies in their infancy,—where the necessities of life are cheap. I tell you, Tom, that you ought to have lived upon your pay there without touching your private income at all."

"And *I* tell *you*, sir," returned Captain Hawkesworth, hotly, "that you have been grossly misinformed as to the state of society in those colonies! Th er

is as much empty pride, as much exclusiveness of caste in Dunedin, as—as in London. I do not put this forth as an apology, but it is strictly true.”

“This is always the way with you young men, Tom; no sooner are you your own masters, as the phrase goes, than you reduce yourselves to the position of slaves; for what is a man in debt but a *slave*? I shall take good care to ascertain Robert’s fitness for the trust before I give up the estates to him. No doubt he will follow your admirable example, and have them mortgaged to the last acre before he is thirty-five? If your father had deferred your majority, sir, until you had sense to use it aright, this would not have happened. Now, I suppose, I am to attribute this visit, not to any real friendliness of feeling, but simply to your desire to be extricated from the bog in which you have stuck?” (Mr. Chesney was very much excited, or he would not have made use of so inelegant a simile.)

“You may attribute my visit to any motives you please, sir. I am not a beggar. All I want of you is advice, and your interest in procuring for me the appointment of commandant at Tredhill, which is now vacant. You see I am as plain with you, uncle Stephen, as you with me. I have been knocking about the world a good deal since I saw you last; but I have still a warm corner in my heart for you and yours; and a little spice of the old reverence

with which I used to look up to you. If any other man had called me a 'scoundrel,' I'd have taken pretty sharp measures to prevent his applying that epithet to me for the future. But I know you, uncle Stephen. I dare say you are mortified that a fellow with whom you took so much pains should have turned out a black sheep. If you won't help me now, I must do my best to mend my own fortune; for to no other man in England will I stoop to ask assistance."

The Rector was touched. Captain Hawkesworth knew his uncle well; as he said, the only way to *manage* Mr. Chesney was to meet him on his own ground, and show no symptoms of fear or flinching. Tom as a boy had tried this plan with marked success, and come off victorious in conflicts where Robert or Alice would have failed. Thus, as we have said, the Rector was touched. After all, Tom was his favourite nephew—the son of the only sister whom he had ever known; he had embraced with ardour the profession after Mr. Chesney's own heart; and "with all his faults, Tom was a gentleman"—a qualification which in the Rector's eyes outweighed a good many defects.

"Tom," said he severely, "as I said before, you are a scoundrel; but not a *sneaking* scoundrel. You have come here and made a clean breast of your position, and therefore I feel inclined to assist you. Nay, don't interrupt me," as Captain Hawkesworth

seemed on the point of expressing his gratitude, "I desire no thanks; what I do for you will depend greatly on yourself. Thanks in my estimation are as valueless as the chaff that is blown about by the wind. I want *deeds*, Tom! an honest, practical return for the money I invest in you."

"On my soul, uncle," said Captain Hawkesworth, in reality deeply moved by the Rector's kindness, "I will not play you false. I am not a villain. Could the consequences of my folly rest on me alone, you would never have seen me here to-day. It was the thought of Fanny and the little ones that humbled my pride so far as to make me resolve to seek your help."

"I believe you, Tom. You never told me a lie as a boy. I can say that for you. But I fear you will not like the conditions attached to my assistance."

"Beggars cannot be choosers," *thought* Captain Hawkesworth; but he *said*, "I am not in a position to indulge in likes or dislikes."

"Well, then, in the first place, I must have your written promise to abstain from gambling—to give up billiards, cards, and all games of chance."

Captain Hawkesworth hesitated. "You may believe me, uncle, when I say that I will never handle a cue again. But I dare not swear not to do so. I fear to perjure myself. I fear my own strength of resolution."

"Your want of decision will be your ruin," said the

Rector. "I wish that by any possibility Robert and you could be shaken up together. He has the over-plus of self-will that would have made a man of you. If you have not the moral power to say 'No,' Tom, I can have nothing to do with you. I might as well throw my money into the fire. I do not wish you to decide hastily. Think it over, and let me hear from you at the beginning of the week. Only remember, that not a step do I move in the matter until I have this paper from you."

Captain Hawkesworth knew that the Rector was a man of his word: "I dare say you are right," he said; "I shall manage to overcome my scruples."

"No, sir, you will not!" interposed Mr. Chesney hotly; "you will *respect* your scruples, and you will not sign that promise unless you mean to keep faith. Let me tell you, there must be no double-dealing with me, Tom: one trace of it, and I wash my hands of you for ever."

"Good God, sir!" exclaimed the unfortunate captain, amazed at the storm his words had evoked, "what have I said or done that you should accuse me of double-dealing?"

"What do you mean by overcoming your scruples?"

"That was a mere slip of the tongue. I simply meant that I should endeavour to accommodate myself to my circumstances. Is it not enough, uncle,

that I should have brought myself to this pass—should have the misery of being ‘cut’ by all my old set—of being obliged to descend into semi-starvation? Must I also learn that you no longer credit me with the honour of a gentleman?”

“Well, well, Tom; let it pass; perhaps I was hasty. I am a straightforward man myself, and I expect others to be the same. You understand my first condition; the second is, that you follow out your own plan—take the post at Tredhill, if you can get it; and settle down quietly for two years—two years, Tom. At the end of that time, if you have stood your probation well, I shall do my best to restore you to the position you have forfeited. You are my only relative in need of help from me,” said the Rector with a sigh. “Alice is well provided for, and Robert is in no way dependent upon me.”

“My dear, good uncle, how shall I ever repay your kindness?”

“You have not experienced it yet,” the Rector said dryly; “it will have to be worked for, Tom. Fortune is a fickle dame; you despised her when she smiled upon you, and you must not take it amiss if she looks stern enough now at times. You must set yourself seriously and earnestly to retrieve your name. Not a penny of my money shall ever be fooled away, or made ‘ducks and drakes’ of, remember that! Now let us proceed to business.

What is the stipend attached to this post at Tredhill?"

Captain Hawkesworth named a sum that would hardly have covered the yearly butcher's bill at the Rectory.

"Is it really come to this, Tom?" said Mr. Chesney, aghast; "is it this pitiful income that my interest is required to obtain?"

"It may appear pitiful to you, sir, but it will be a godsend to me. I believe there are extra emoluments connected with the training of the militia, but I have heard no particulars yet."

If the Rector had been startled by the insignificance of one sum, he was now to be surprised by the other extreme, for his nephew informed him that, exclusive of those covered by the sale of his commission, his debts amounted to over a thousand pounds.

As he slowly continued his stately march, his hands behind him, his brow wrinkled by efforts to solve the problem how to meet the demand thus unexpectedly made upon him, Mr. Chesney might have been thought to embody in himself the cogitations of a select committee of the Lower House on Ways and Means.

"Tom," he said, suddenly, with the air of one who has made up his mind to some painful sacrifice, "I have no other resource than to appropriate to the payment of your liabilities part of what I had set apart for my poor Walter. I promised him that it

should be applied to the restoration of our old church; but if he were here now, he would be the first to say, 'Give Tom another chance.'"

Captain Hawkesworth was aware that the rebuilding of the church had long been a pet scheme of the Rector as well as of Walter.

"No, uncle Stephen," he said, decidedly, "not that! I will not accept help from you at such a cost. I know how many years you have cherished the plan; you shall not give it up on my account. I should indeed be a mean dog to take such advantage of your generosity."

"Don't say another word, Tom," returned Mr. Chesney, hastily; his determination once taken, he would not allow his mind to dwell longer on the subject. "The church must wait until Robert comes of age, perhaps we may persuade him to give us a new one. It will not be in my time; but that does not signify. Now, let me have a list of those debts—no skulking, Tom! out with every one of them."

And Captain Hawkesworth made the only reparation he could to his uncle, by a full disclosure of the difficulties in which he was involved, and we must do him the justice to say that there was no shirking, no evasion of the truth, much as it redounded to his own discredit.

No doubt many young men in his position may think that they too would have gladly availed themselves of so simple a method of extrication, had the

opportunity been offered them, and thanked their stars that they had got off so easily. We can only say that Tom's confession to his uncle was not all sunshine, not the mere shaking of the plumage after a storm, preparatory to a second and joyful flight.

Before their interview came to an end, Captain Hawkesworth had greater cause than ever to regret the misdeeds, the short-sighted career of pleasure, which had placed him at his uncle's mercy; he had to swallow many a bitter pill, and to listen, in all humility, while the folly of his course was pointed out to him, and his selfishness lashed with no tender hand. Mr. Chesney could do a noble, generous action, but he had no idea of allowing an offender to escape with perfect impunity; he welcomed the returning prodigal, but made him feel that the way of transgressors is hard.

Nevertheless, when Captain Hawkesworth rose to go, he breathed more freely than he had done for many months, and said, with tears in his eyes, as he grasped his uncle warmly by the hand, "God bless you, uncle Stephen! you will never have to regret your confidence. I will know neither peace nor happiness until I can face you like an honourable man, and know that I have repaid you every farthing."

"Amen!" said the Rector, heartily; but it was with a troubled countenance that he slowly returned

to the dining-room after accompanying his nephew to the door, and resumed his place, his head resting wearily on his hand. "I could not have done otherwise," he reflected. "Poor Jenny's boy.—With all his faults, Tom is a good, kind-hearted fellow at bottom. He is only his own enemy."—(*Only his own enemy? we are not so sure of this.*) "But the church and the window which poor Walter took such pride in designing! Well, well, better that the money should be used in setting the lad upon his feet again, than that it should be buried in bricks and mortar. I wonder if he will have the resolution to go through his two years?"

The object of his solicitude, meanwhile, pursued his solitary way to the village, reflecting with mingled feelings on his visit. It is not to be expected that, after the exposure he had just made, and the mental castigation he had suffered, Captain Hawkesworth could be on very good terms with himself. His easy, good-natured nonchalance was disturbed; for the first time he had been made to see himself in the light of a strictly honourable, self-denying nature, and the contrast was not gratifying to his pride. As usual, when a mortifying discovery has taken place, there was a little natural resentment against the revealer.

"My uncle is very good—and—and all that," thought Captain Hawkesworth, "but I wish he were not quite so much of the old school. If I had known

what was before me, I'd have gone through the Bankruptcy Court sooner than cringe to him. He makes a fellow feel so acutely what he does for him," and for a time he relapsed into excessive bitterness against the Rector. This did not last long, however, his better nature prevailed. "What a wretch I am to think thus of him! Poor uncle Stephen! I really believe he has a soft place in his heart for me. What although he did rate me pretty sharply? I dare say I deserve it;" and in this frame of mind, when gratitude strove to gain the upper hand, he entered the Chesney Arms and inquired for his friend.

On being informed that he had not yet returned, Captain Hawkesworth glanced with irritation at his watch, and retired to the private room they had hired, where for some time he paced the floor, the freshly-sprinkled sand of which grated beneath his tread, as if in harmony with his smarting sensibility. Suddenly the door was thrown open; a man entered, and, shutting it hastily behind him, sank on a chair with the spasmodic breathing and excited gestures of one who has just sustained a violent shock.

"Why, Bully, Bully! what the devil is the matter?" said Captain Hawkesworth, after he had recovered from his surprise.

James Clayton, or Bully Clayton, as he was familiarly known among his circle of intimates, was a

short, thickset man, considerably past middle age. The round, bullet-shaped head (which, together with certain mental characteristics supposed to accompany that form of cranium, had procured for him his felicitous appellation) seemed to grow out of the shoulders without the slight break generally considered necessary to artistic beauty, and was remarkable for nothing but the strong development of the lower jaw, the porcine expression of the two receding eyes, and the peculiar curve of two tufts of wiry hair which projected on either side above the temples, with a striking resemblance to the ornaments affixed, in an old painting we have seen, to a certain individual who is undergoing the torture of having his nose pulled by a pair of red-hot tongs in the hands of a holy saint.

Bully Clayton, seen under the influence of abject terror, with livid complexion and chattering teeth, was not precisely the exemplar that would have been brought forward to clinch an argument in refutation of Mr. Darwin's theory of Natural Selection, for he might have been evolved out of anything, from a porcupine with startled bristles, to a trembling chimpanzee.

"Good heavens, Clayton! what can have happened?" said Captain Hawkesworth, as he administered a restorative shake, for he really began to be alarmed at his friend's prolonged tremor.

"Brandy," was all that Clayton could be under-

stood to mutter, and Captain Hawkesworth at once took the hint. He went out and procured a glass of stiff brandy and water; and, having disposed of this cordial at one gulp, Clayton gradually regained his composure, and began to assume an aspect somewhat more human.

"This d——d place!" were his first articulate words; "I'd never have come with you, Tom, had I known it was haunted."

"*Haunted!*" said Captain Hawkesworth, with a look of contempt.

"Ay, haunted! I've seen a ghost."

"You have been drinking too much, and seen your own shadow, Bully," said Captain Hawkesworth. "Now, if you are sufficiently composed, we had better set off, or we shall lose our train."

From the amount of the reckoning tendered by mine host, it would seem that Bully had indeed been indulging pretty freely; but Captain Hawkesworth paid it without comment, and they started on their walk to Tredhill. The cool evening air speedily had its effect on Mr. Clayton, who in a short time presented the appearance of an ordinary man; ordinary in his gait, bearing, and manner—*extraordinary* in a certain cunning, persistent doggedness, which made itself perceptible in every feature, every movement.

"I say, Tom," he began, "ain't you glad I poked you up to the scratch, eh? If it hadn't been for

me, you'd never have come down here. I can see from your high and mighty airs that the old boy has forked out."

Disgust and annoyance were legibly written on Captain Hawkesworth's face, as he replied, "I must beg you to remember, Clayton, that we are no longer in the bush."

His companion shot a quick glance at him: "I beg your pardon, Captain Hawkesworth. Did his ecclesiastical highness, the Rector of Ilmington, dub out the needful?"

"My uncle has promised to assist me."

"To what tune?"

"He will clear off the remainder of my debts, and, God be thanked, yours among the rest, Clayton."

"Hm!" said that worthy, "five hundred and seventy-nine pounds, eight shillings, and eleven pence, advanced without security; you ought to make it six hundred, Tom."

"Good heavens, Clayton!" said the Captain, impatiently, "your demands increase every day. You know you are paying yourself at the rate of fifty per cent."

"Well, well, Captain; don't be angry; we know each other. It isn't every day we go to visit a rich old uncle,—eh Tom? How much humble-pie did you have to swallow?"

With a fierce exclamation, Captain Hawkesworth thrust his companion aside, and strode on in front

at a pace so rapid that it taxed all Clayton's strength (weakened by his interview with the supernatural visitor) to keep up with him, and thus the remainder of the journey to Tredhill was performed in silence.

CHAPTER XII.

SUNDAY AT THE RECTORY: FORENOON.

MR. CHESNEY and his daughter always breakfasted together in a little room dignified by the name of Alice's boudoir; the family breakfast-room being too large and formal to be occupied with comfort by only two persons. It was a sunny nook in the oldest part of the house; you made a sudden descent of three deep steps from the gallery into it; and once inside, there merely wanted the appearance of the gigantic eagle to warrant your fancying yourself in Gulliver's travelling-box; so small and compact was not only the apartment, but everything contained in it.

Here stood Alice's piano, an old-fashioned instrument, which had been her mother's, and whose feeble worn tone sounded sweeter in her ears on that account than the powerful Erard in the drawing-room. Here was her little collection of books; no author admitted to the shelves whose thoughts were not well-nigh as familiar to her as her own. Here rested her work-basket, already filled with materials for the great Christmas donations; out of this there peeped, we are sorry to say, very bright colours—scarlet, blue,

and pink,—“altogether unsuitable for the poor,” as Mrs. Marsden would fain have had Alice believe. Here, lastly, in a desk, were the weary account-books which had to be submitted to her father every Monday morning, and which never failed to elicit the remark that “even a dog would bark at the figures”—not from any canine suspicion as to the latter being the representatives of thieving propensities, on the part of the young housekeeper or her deputy, but solely by reason of their exceeding ugliness. Altogether the snuggest, cheeriest little room in all that snug, cheery land called England; so, at least, thought Alice; and doubtless you would have agreed with her, dear reader, had you seen it on that bright, still Sunday morning, with its mistress daintily making tea for her father, while, at the broad deep casement, the soft wind blew in with his secrets of hidden banks of wild thyme, and dells of honeysuckle, known only to himself.

As she handed him his second cup, the Rector suddenly recollected that he had not seen Alice since dinner the previous day; she had been compelled to retire early on account of a severe headache arising from the excitement of the morning. “By the way, Alice,” said he, “where did you ride yesterday? It was very imprudent of you to venture out alone, after fainting as you did.”

“I could not rest, papa, without seeing Lady Charleswood.”

"Ha! so you went to The Cedars? That was right."

A pause ensued. "Papa," began Alice, timidly, "don't you think that Lady Charleswood has suffered a great deal, for what, after all, was hardly her fault? She was driven to it."

The Rector moved uneasily in his chair. "She was driven to it, as you say, Alice; but a woman who has once taken the step Lady Charleswood did, is always viewed with suspicion, be her subsequent life what it may. Still, if any one ever deserved that a lapse should be forgiven and forgotten, it is Lucy."

Another pause. "You do not believe, papa, that any one could possibly imagine *she* had a share in that dreadful deed?"

"Her elopement taking place on the very night of the murder unfortunately gave people a handle for imagining what they chose. No one who read the evidence at the coroner's inquest could have a shadow of reason for suspecting Lucy; but she did not come to this part of the country till long afterwards, when nothing more certain than vague rumours could be learned, without a great deal of trouble being taken to investigate the matter. I took that trouble, because I believed it my duty as Rector of the parish, and I have since made a point of spreading abroad my opinion on suitable occasions; but people still seem shy of her. It is most unfortunate that the guilty party cannot be discovered."

"Lady Charleswood says she has given up hoping for that."

"Poor thing! it seems like clinging to a straw to expect that justice will be done after the lapse of a quarter of a century; but they say, 'Murder *will* out,' and I earnestly trust the proverb may hold good in her case. In the meantime, Alice, you have my sanction to go to The Cedars as often as you like. Be cheerful with her; don't let her grow morbid thinking over her troubles.—If Lucy had been a different stamp of woman," pursued the Rector, speaking to himself, rather than to Alice, "she would not have felt her position so keenly. If she could have carried matters with a high hand, and made use of Henry's wealth to attract a gay crowd around her—with her beauty and talents, the one fault would soon have been buried in oblivion. Or, if she had run away with a Marquis, instead of with his younger brother, it might have been more speedily forgotten. The higher the rank, the greater the impunity," said the Rector, bitterly. "Because Lucy is a shrinking, sensitive creature—browbeat in her childhood, abused by her first husband, tremblingly alive to the good opinion of others, bent own under a sense of evil more fancied than real—the frivolous butterflies who constitute society set themselves on high as her judges! the empty-headed dolls, who have not a tithe of her purity of thought and sentiment, presume to trample upon *her*; to set

their foot, in the strength of their untried innocence, on her neck. I hate such hypocrisy! I hate such false ways!" said the Rector, bringing his hand emphatically down upon the table. "By all means let the guilty be punished; but let no man, or woman either, be assumed guilty when the evidences of innocence are as clear as the noon-day, if others will but rouse themselves from their indolence to search and look. But no! it is easier far to pass by on the other side, to take one's views at second hand, ready formed; to spare oneself the exertion of independent thought; and so the innocent and the guilty suffer alike. But 'there are first who shall be last, and last who shall be first,'" -concluded Mr. Chesney, and Alice's heart glowed as she heard her father speak thus. There was a new bond of sympathy between them now.

Her satisfaction was not to remain long unbroken, however, for the Rector had not forgotten Robert's letter, and now asked for it. His brow darkened as he read the unfortunate postscript. "I must write Frank to-morrow," he said. "I hope he has made all proper inquiries before allowing Robert to contract this friendship. These musicians are even worse than painters—erratic, crack-brained, fancy-spinning Bohemians, with no settled aim or object in life. I only trust he may not lead Robert off his feet."

Alice's idea of an artist was something different from the scarecrow that kept watch over her father's

proprieties, but she wisely said nothing, and the Rector left the room to prepare for church.

Mr. Chesney and his daughter issued from the Rectory door at precisely a quarter before eleven; neither a minute sooner nor a minute later. Punctual as clockwork, their appearance on the top of the hill leading down to the church, was the signal for the sexton to apply his energies to the summoning of the congregation. The best of old Timothy Sykes' days may fairly be considered to have passed, for he would assuredly never see seventy again; but no persuasion could induce him to give up the post, which he had filled for nearly forty years; and there was every reason to believe that by his obstinate clinging to his favourite bell-rope he would, on some occasion not very remote, sound his own death-knell. In addition to the natural decay of his powers, Timothy was troubled by an asthmatic cough, which imperceptibly reproduced itself in his mode of ringing. He would begin with a single stroke—a wheezy "Come;" then he would pause to recover breath, and ejaculate under difficulties a doleful "Come to church!" twice repeated—a fit of coughing would jerk out an irritable, "Why won't you come?" and this energetic protest would be followed by a total silence of two minutes, during which Timothy rested his old arms before recommencing the same euphonious performance.

Alice sits by herself in the old rectory-pew, after

her father has passed into the vestry, glancing at the newly-erected marble tablet on the wall, and listening to the creak of the bell-rope. She is generally the first in the church ; then comes a noisy pattering of little feet—the school children marching in under the wing of Miss Spry, the mistress. After five minutes' subdued fuss, they are finally settled : the boys on one side, radiant in the hebdomadal finery of clean faces and broad shirt-collars, every one with hands in pockets to assure himself that his mother has not abstracted the crab-apples which are to come into operation when the Rector is fairly launched upon the Litany, and Miss Spry's vigilant eye withdrawn for a time ; the girls on their own benches in their time-honoured costume—a short white tippet (replaced by scarlet in winter), with the hideous straw bonnet tied underneath the chin by a band of broad blue ribbon. Alice notices with a smile the air of shame-faced defiance with which Mary Jones takes her seat. She has been fixed upon by Mrs. Marsden as the most promising candidate for the post of scullery-maid at the Rectory, and is to leave the school in less than a month. Accordingly, Mary celebrates her coming emancipation by appearing in a bright green ribbon, to the admiration and envy of all her companions—to the undisguised wrath of Miss Spry, who hands her a Church Service turned down at the lesson treating of the nose-jewels and tinkling ornaments of the Hebrew

maidens—a proceeding which the girl very naturally resents.

If the truth were known, poor Mary would be found only “walking according to ensample,” as St. Paul enjoins, for her high airs are but a feeble imitation of the flounce with which Miss Spry passes the rectory-pew, and subsides into her own place among the children. During Alice’s absence, she had been promoted to the post of honour at the organ, where she had conducted the musical part of the service to her own entire satisfaction, and the admiration of several of the young farmers about—working hard with hands, feet, and voice; pitching the Psalms in the very highest key that could be sustained without an absolute break-down, and taking the Sanctus at a speed unexampled even in village annals.

It was, therefore, no small trial to be obliged to descend from this pinnacle of glory, to retire into obscurity—into a dark corner, where the poppies on her new bonnet were thrown away, so far as John Edmunds was concerned; to have to sit quietly by during two hours in the week—*she*, who had been trained on Hullah’s method!—while Alice endeavoured to infuse a little solemnity into the singing of the children, or, as Miss Spry would have openly characterized it, had she dared, “tried to teach them a lot of new-fangled nonsense. For *her* part, she did not see how God could be acceptably praised

under one's breath ; the Bible said 'make a joyful noise,' and she meant to hold by the Bible ; *she* did !"

The organ, a small, but rich-toned instrument, infinitely preferable to the ear-torturing harmoniums now so much in vogue, had been placed in the rectory-pew for Mrs. Chesney's convenience ; and it was one of Alice's secretly-cherished aims to bring up the Psalmody to the state of refinement for which it had been remarkable during her mother's life ; this, however, promised to be a work of time.

A thin sprinkling of the aristocratic element finds its way into closely-curtained pews ; the farmers' wives and families take their places, and, warned by the sudden cessation of old Timothy's labours that the service is about to commence, a body of male rustics come trooping in from their gossiping lounge in the churchyard, bringing with them that undefinable odour of the earth, earthy, peculiar to Hodge, which the Sunday allowance of scented bear's grease or tallow-candle is impotent to neutralize. Even when the whole congregation is assembled within the walls, however, many empty seats may be observed, and, together with the breeze that steals in at the open door, there floats the faint sound of psalm-singing from the rival conventicle not very far distant, where John Stubbs holds forth to the edification of a goodly number of his brethren, who consider it an infallible token of grace and unction that he should find time to prepare his weekly address amid the

multifarious demands which throng upon him, six days out of the seven, in his capacity as village cobbler. At the last moment, a veiled figure softly enters the rectory-pew; there is only time for a hasty pressure of the hand; the Rector has already left the vestry, and Alice must commence her little voluntary.

Robert may have been right (or wrong) in his opinion of his uncle's qualifications as a renderer of comedy; but there could be no question whatever about his reading of the service—it was simply magnificent. Old Sykes had been heard to say that, “the Rector’s readin’ war as good as a picter,” and the comparison was not so unapt as we may at first suppose; for Mr. Chesney had certainly the power of producing in the mind of his auditors that soothing effect which is evoked by the sight of a well-grouped, harmoniously-tinted painting; while the illusion of the “pictor” was no doubt heightened by the corporeal presence of the reader—his grand *physique*, sternly classic features, and dignified bearing. But, alas! with the exchange of the white robe for the black, the reading-desk for the pulpit, the spell was broken, the charm fled; for a more set, frigid, formal manner than that in which Mr. Chesney delivered his sermons cannot well be imagined. But the fault lay partly in the compositions themselves—hear the Rector read: “Awake! awake! put on strength, O arm of the Lord!” and he would have

inspired you: listen to an original essay, and you would hardly have been able to keep your attention alive for the twenty minutes beyond which he never detained his congregation. The fact is, his sermons were dead. Composed, all of them, twenty years before, the little vitality they ever possessed had evaporated long since, or rather, had met with a violent end during the critical processes to which from time to time they had been subjected.

Did Mr. Chesney, then, ascend the pulpit without due preparation? By no means! Every Thursday afternoon was religiously spent in his study; the homilies for next Sunday were taken in rotation from the pigeon-holes where they had slumbered for a certain number of years, and the pruning-knife of mature taste applied vigorously in lopping off an excrescence here, engrafting a classical quotation there, removing any expression which threatened to bud out into vulgar life, until, as we have seen, the tree that should have borne fruit for the religious nourishment of Ilmington during the week was gradually killed. The best and most natural thoughts eliminated, the vehicle that had contained them might be polished and brilliant as a diamond, it was equally cold and lifeless, without the power to grave a single lasting line upon the human heart.

Paradoxical as it may appear, we are inclined to attribute this want of success to an over-conscientiousness, a strained scrupulosity; he gave of his best, he

could do no more. If we have described Mr. Chesney with anything approaching truth, the reader must see in him a thoroughly practical man; and from such a preacher we naturally expect a thoroughly practical sermon—strong, trenchant, a little severe at times, sensible always. These were not the characteristics of the Rector's sermons; he had not the first elements of the "gift" of preaching; he could show his people the example of a perfectly consistent life—consistent, that is to say, with his professions. His parish to outward appearance was a model one; his house was a dispensary, open to all in need, for soup, jelly, and wine; his advice on almost every object was eagerly sought and heard with respect: still, with all these excellent qualities, Mr. Chesney was devoid of the broad, tender sympathy essential above all other faculties to the preacher. If he could have persuaded old Betty, who sat bent double on the pulpit-stairs, that the east wind which caused her "rheumatiz" was sent by the same Hand that gave the sunshine, and that the latter would certainly follow, if she had but patience to wait, he would have done her an infinitely greater service than had ever been effected by the metaphors and tropes which were weekly showered upon her head. What cared Betty for the "circumambient atmosphere," the "architect of the universe," and "the artillery of heaven"? She would rather have heard about the woman who in sweeping out her house

found the lost piece of money ; and to her old brain there would have been no difficulty in applying the parable.

In addition to his stiff manner, the Rector had also an unfortunate habit of fixing his eye (unconsciously) upon some particular person in the congregation, greatly to the discomfort of the individual thus singled out, who naturally concluded that what was being said at the time was specially intended for himself, and resented it accordingly. The general opinion with regard to this trait may be gathered from a discontented outburst of one member of the flock, more independent-minded than the majority: "He warn't a-goin' to set still and be made a example of, not he! He knowed he warn't nothink to boast of, but he warn't no wuss nor his neighbours. And wot's more! he had no mind to be treated like them poor-speerited lot at t' fort, wot knowed as 'ow they'd be clapped into prisin afore they could say Jack Robison, if 'appen they forgot to touch their 'at to every slip of a officer wot passed. He war a free-born Englishman, *he* war ; and he'd let t' parson know 't."

This declaration of independence on the part of Bill Jones, brother to the Mary before-mentioned, had caused a large accession of the rising generation to the rival temple, whereby the heart of John Stubbs was mightily refreshed ; but the older and more respectable portion of the community stuck

valiantly by Mr. Chesney; and the better-class farmers, who saw him occasionally at the "Meet," gloried in their Rector as the chief ornament to the parish, and were unanimous in declaring that, with all his aristocratic notions, he "was a deal pleasanter to get on with than some of your upstart clergy who had been educated into gentlemen—not *born* to it."

With the greater part of his flock, however, Mr. Chesney was not a favourite; they had not the opportunity of seeing him when the excitement of the "run" had effectually chased away all *hauteur*; and he was generally looked upon as a stern, reserved man, whom it was utterly impossible to approach in the light of a pastor—still less in that of a physician of souls.

Notwithstanding, we can imagine an instance when the Rector would suddenly have become the most popular man in the parish—ay, and for miles round. Could a despatch have reached him, while the inhabitants of Ilmington and the surrounding district were still in church, with the news that an invading fleet had suddenly been descried from the fort at Tredhill, that the beacons were flaming all along the coast, that every man must be upon the alert, then would the Rector's stern enthusiasm have manifested itself in a way never to be forgotten! The stilted sermon would have dropped from his grasp; with face aglow and

uplifted arm he would have cried "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" With pithy, manly eloquence, the reminder of what "England expects" would have bounded from heart and lip, and roused the energies of all who heard him; to a man they would have risen—those sleepy, bovine rustics—and followed their surpliced leader with no better weapons than they could secure on the march—certain of victory, under him who went before, like his ancestor of old, with the Bible in one hand and the sword in the other. But, unfortunately for Mr. Chesney, no such incidence occurred; and his real nature remained a secret to the public gaze, shrouded beneath its iron mask.

The benediction has been pronounced; Alice commences the march from "Athalie;" the congregation disperses to its inspiriting sound, which revives the feelings the Rector had extinguished for the moment, and in a short time the church is deserted. Mr. Chesney appears in his lay-costume, greets Lady Charleswood cordially, and they pass out together, Alice and her friend walking slowly on, while he pauses to say a few kindly words to a woman who is sitting dejectedly on a broad, flat, newly-placed gravestone. She shakes her head and appears untouched, but the Rector's words are not without effect, and in a few minutes she rises with unwonted elasticity, and wends her solitary way home.

CHAPTER XIII.

SUNDAY AT THE RECTORY : AFTERNOON.

IN the interval between Morning Service and luncheon it was Mr. Chesney's invariable custom, winter and summer, to proceed to the inspection of his horses. We doubt if many people are endowed by nature with a taste so peculiarly *horsey* as that of the lady who once declared, that, "if the aroma of the stable could be condensed into a perfume, she would use it in preference to any other!"—but certainly the remark must have been elicited by stables conducted on the plan of those at Ilmington, where the most fastidious nose could sniff nothing in the least displeasing. Alice was not in the habit of going near the yard during the week; but on Sundays her father liked her to be constantly with him, and, to tell the truth, she had inherited enough of his love for horse-flesh to be able to enjoy the visit. The exquisitely-clean, tiled floor—the sleek, glossy animals standing each in its own stall, contemplating at its leisure, if it were of a literary turn, its name inscribed in large letters above its head, or, if its tastes were less refined,

seeking consolation in its well-filled rack—this was a pleasant sight! And in its way, the harness-room was equally profite; every inch of steel, every girth, every buckle, polished to the last pitch of brightness; not an article out of its place; not a vestige of confusion. Walter had not unaptly described his father as “a bit of a martinet;” no inspecting colonel of a crack regiment could have been more particular than he; and woe betide the unlucky groom or stable-boy who should dare to infringe one of the numerous rules and bye-laws posted up in large text for the general edification!

To-day the visit does not finish in so prompt a manner as usual. The brown mare is discovered to have lamed one of her forefeet; and a discussion ensues between the Rector and his factotum John as to the relative merits of rival embrocations. This lasts so long that Alice and Lady Charleswood have gone through the new pinery before Mr. Chesney joins them again.

As the great bell tolled out the summons to luncheon, Alice perceived two figures advancing along the avenue towards the house; one she knew,—the other was a stranger.

“Papa,” she said, “there is Mr. Tooke. Who is that with him?”

“His son,” replied the Rector briefly; and as the new-comers approached he welcomed them in his most affable manner (by *affable* we understand

cordiality tempered with a certain degree of condescension), and introduced the younger of the two to his daughter and Lady Charleswood as "Mr. Edward Tooke"—the father was an old friend of both.

Mr. Tooke, senior, was what is called a "self-made" man—all the more honour to him for it! such men have *made* England. He had gradually risen, by dint of plodding and acuteness combined, from the position of errand-boy in a solicitor's office to that of law-agent, man of business, and confidential adviser to most of the county families—Mr. Chesney's among the number. He was a portly little man who wore a wig, and had never been seen by mortal vision outside of his own house without a pair of green spectacles (which ought to have belonged to the Solicitor-General at least), and a dapper, neatly-rolled-up umbrella. So attached was he to the last-mentioned article, that we see no reason for disbelieving a rumour current in the neighbourhood that he had never allowed it to be desecrated by a shower of rain, but in wet weather always provided himself with a second means of shelter. In his own peculiar line, the Man in Spectacles was universally esteemed; for not only could he see a mile further than any other person, but he also had the good sense to keep the results of his scrutiny locked up within his own breast—hence his wide-spread reputation for wisdom and profundity. He had been three times honoured by a

request from his fellow-citizens that he would accept the office of Mayor of Tredhill; but either his modesty, or his fear of being involved in needless expense, had hitherto prevented his complying with the general wish. His son it was who had filled Mr. Chesney's place during his absence.

To those who knew him, Edward Tooke was an angel in human guise—not a face but brightened at his approach, not a weary soul but felt the better for a few words from him. And yet poor Edward pursued his way under difficulties, for he had a countenance that was only redeemed from positive ugliness by the gentleness and intellectuality of its expression. The flippant remark of a casual observer regarding him would probably have been “a commonplace, pockmarked, ungainly, little fellow!”

This was the young clergyman's first visit to the Rectory. Since Mr. Chesney's return, he had been stationed as missionary among the seafaring population of Tredhill, an office which engrossed all his thoughts as well as his leisure. Besides, though bold as a lion where duty called, Edward was somewhat shy, and conscious of his plebeian appearance in society, consequently it had cost him an effort to accompany his father to Tredhill that afternoon.

Alice felt both surprised and disappointed in him. Indeed, we are not sure that a little contempt did not mingle with the civility which she showed him during luncheon; but knowing how high he stood

in her father's estimation, she deferred her final judgment.

"Mr. Edward!" said the Rector, suddenly, "I have a favour to ask of you. Will you preach for me this afternoon? Everybody talks so much of your powers of sermonizing, from Farmer Forbes down to old Betty, that we are all anxious to hear you. It is now three years since I had that pleasure."

Edward blushed. "I fear I am not sufficiently prepared, Mr. Chesney," he said; "I had not the slightest intention of preaching to-day."

"They tell me that your extempore sermons are your best." Edward blushed again, more painfully still, and his father muttered a silent "Drat the lad!"

"I—I fear that I am not in the vein to speak without preparation."

"The *vein*, Mr. Edward! surely you do not believe in such crotchets?" said the Rector, with his calm smile of superiority; *he* never yielded to the weakness of moods, or "veins" either. "Come! let me consider it settled! you will really oblige me very much by taking my place to-day. Mr. Tooke," he continued, after disposing of Edward's objections in this summary fashion, "will you step into my study for a few minutes?"

"Certainly, sir," replied the lawyer, "I shall be with you in a moment;" but he remained behind to whisper earnestly in his son's ear, "Edward, I am

surprised at your hesitation! When I saw you blushing like a school-girl, I came all over in a cold perspiration. What *will* the ladies think of you? Such an opportunity for distinguishing yourself! You know you look your best in the pulpit. Do strain a point, for the honour of the family!" by which appeal we may assume that Mr. Tooke differed from the Rector in thinking that there might possibly be more than *one* family in the district.

"Dear father, if it is given to me, I shall speak," returned Edward, quietly; and with this Mr. Tooke was obliged to be satisfied. He hurried after Mr. Chesney, who forthwith confided to the oracular bosom his troubles with regard to Captain Hawkesworth and the post of commandant at Tredhill.

The ladies considerably left the young man to compose his thoughts and sketch his sermon, and when the first afternoon "Come!" sounded, Edward declared himself ready, and they all sallied forth in a body. The news that young Mr. Tooke had consented to take the Rector's "duty" once more, spread through the village with marvellous rapidity, for he was beloved by young and old, and the church was speedily thronged by an assemblage much larger than the second service usually drew together, including the greater part of John Stubbs' flock. The Rector saw it with unmixed satisfaction—the "green-eyed monster" had no part in him; and besides, he explained Edward's popularity in a way

very satisfactory to himself: "It is only natural that he should be able to enlist the sympathy of that class—for he knows how to appeal to them—he is one of themselves—he is one of the people!"

Mr. Tooke had displayed his usual acumen in the notion that Edward showed to the greatest advantage in the pulpit. On this occasion he had to bear comparison with an exceptionally fine-looking man; but, notwithstanding, as Alice gazed on the transformation which took place, she wondered how she could ever have thought him "ugly"—the plain features lit up with a glory not their own, and the pathos of a soul thoroughly in earnest shone from the deep eyes.

Edward began by intimating that he was not prepared to give a regular "sermon," and therefore that he left each of his auditors to choose whatever text might seem most appropriate to himself—the subject on which he proposed to speak being wide enough to admit of a far-reaching basis. He then proceeded to sketch in detail a mountain—a preliminary not unnecessary for his hearers, few of whom could form any idea of an altitude greater than the chalk-cliffs at Tredhill. Under Edward's treatment, this ideal mountain stands out a reality to the eyes of the congregation, with its towering crags—their hoary summits hidden among the clouds; its untrodden fields of ice, its forest garment, its ever-varying alternation of sunshine and

gloom. Then comes an internal convulsion—the crater yawns; the lava pours forth its molten stream; the rocks rend; and the topmost portion, severed from the parent mass, descends with inconceivable rapidity together with the fiery torrent, until it finally crashes against the bottom of the valley below. There it lies—bemired, befouled, never again to enjoy the fresh breezes of heaven, to bask in the sunshine, or afford a resting-place for the eagle.

Leaving the stone to its fate, Edward depicts the struggles of a helpless sheep to regain that inaccessible peak—its contests with briars and thorns; its wanderings into false paths; its unsatisfied hunger and thirst; its slipping back amid quagmires; its final sinking from exhaustion but a few paces from the spot whence it had originally set out. Suddenly the heaven above opens, a troop of the angelic host proclaims “Peace on earth—Glory in the Highest!” The shepherds at Bethlehem recognise the divine Saviour; the human sacrifice is stayed.

It is needless to follow the application of the metaphors. Suffice it, that no soul was left in doubt as to the “good tidings”—none could salve his conscience with the plea that he did not “understand the preacher.” If Edward’s style had not the John-sonian ring, it was all the more closely allied to the “well of English undefiled,” or rather, to the homely pathos of honest John Bunyan. It is a question

whether he could have varied his manner in addressing a more cultivated audience. In Divine things we are all little children, and the simpler the mode of dealing with them, the better. It does not necessarily follow that the thoughts shall be trite and childish because they are clothed in a transparent garment. When he paused, there was silence for a moment—that perfect stillness which marks the rapt attention; and Edward felt that for one week at least he had stolen a march upon the enemy; with a brighter hope, and a clearer view, the peasants whom he had addressed would lift their eyes unto the hills, and seek their help from the Mighty One.

Nor was it the humbler portion of the community alone who had been touched by the sermon; for while he was speaking of the Ineffable Love and Pity descending to the rescue of fallen man, the great tears had silently dropped on Lady Charleswood's clasped hands; Alice felt thoroughly ashamed of her narrow idea of the preacher; and Mr. Chesney, with a presentiment that there was yet "power" among the "people," shook hands cordially with the young man, and prophesied that he would one day "rise," to the intense satisfaction of the little old lawyer, who seemed to have suddenly grown two inches taller, so great was the pride he felt in his son.

"Edward only requires to be known to be appre-

ciated," he observed to the Rector; "but he *will* persist in burying himself at Tredhill."

"We must persuade him to leave Tredhill," responded Mr. Chesney; "a man of very inferior ability could do all that is to be accomplished there."

Edward overheard the last remark, and smiled quietly to himself. As they left the church he and Alice brought up the rear.

"Mr. Edward," said the latter suddenly, "did you not take your first illustration from 'Il Natale,' the Christmas Ode?"

"I did, Miss Chesney," replied Edward, with pleased surprise, "the main idea, at least; and had I been speaking to a more refined audience I should have thought it necessary to express my obligation to Manzoni, but to-day it would only have wrought confusion. I happened to be reading it yesterday, and it struck me that it would make a very good introduction. Of course, you cannot follow out the analogy very far—the stone falls, and there it lies; but I always like, if possible, to begin with some such material illustration, some parable. These poor creatures, ground down all the week, with no intellectual resource, no change from the monotonous round, require this management. It does not do with them to proceed at once to the purely spiritual; you must rouse their attention, and get them interested in what you are saying, before you can penetrate to their hearts."

"I think you accomplished your end," said Alice, more attracted by Edward's mind than she had previously been repelled by his appearance; "everybody listened with intense interest, even the children. I am glad you like Manzoni."

"I fear I must plead guilty to a very scanty acquaintance with him, as well as with all Italian authors," said Edward. "The truth is, I am only just beginning to surmount the first difficulties of the language. I come in contact with so many foreigners in my present post, that it really forms an elementary part of my duty to be able to speak to them in their several tongues. French and German I can manage, and now I am struggling with Italian. The way in which the poor fellows' faces brighten, when a familiar word falls upon their ear, is reward enough for all the study it entails. It seems to come to them like a message from home. I have never been abroad myself, never out of England," he added, apologetically, "but I should imagine that in a strange land the sound of the mother-tongue must be refreshing as a draught of water in Sahara."

"Yes, you are right. On the Continent we mustered in force; there were four of us, including my cousin, besides servants; nevertheless, we were always delighted to meet with English people. Do you not find preaching to the sailors very uphill work?"

"No, I cannot say that I do," replied Edward, his face lighting up. "There are many rough diamonds among the seafaring folk. I could tell you of heroic deeds, and instances of courageous self-sacrifice, which have fallen under my own personal notice, that would bring the tears to your eyes; but they are sadly neglected. I recollect, as a boy, I used to watch the men lounging about in the low public-houses, and although I shuddered at their rough language (for I was always a feeble little chap, and a great deal with my mother), even then my heart went out to them, and I thought, 'Will no man speak to them, and *compel* them to come in?' They are men who will not go to church, as a rule, and therefore the church must go to them. Now, I have been called to the work, and I glory in it."

"It is a noble work," said Alice, kindling with the enthusiasm of her companion.

"It is, Miss Chesney," replied Edward, simply, "and it is doubly blessed. A God-fearing sailor leaves a trace of his presence at every port he visits; and the Seed is sown with much greater rapidity than among a rural population such as you have here. Men who have to buffet with the winds, and to plough the waves in daily peril of their lives, are as a class much more susceptible than those who till the land."

By this time they had reached the Rectory gate, and Mr. Chesney pressed the father and son to

remain to dinner, an invitation which both declined.

"Do not be so long in coming to see us again, Mr. Edward," said the Rector, urbanely; he really had taken a great liking to Edward. (With all his talent, the young man knew his place so well.) "Your father has been telling me of your efforts among the sailors. Alice here will be happy to chatter Italian with you by the hour together," and Alice signified her willingness to take part in the good work, with a smile so winning, and a glance from the violet eyes so sweet and sympathetic, that the heart of the poor young missionary bounded with a new and exquisite joy. In his dreams he had seen those dove-like eyes, and heard that clear, ringing voice; but never before had they appealed to his waking senses. He felt like one asleep, and in a kind of mental intoxication seated himself mechanically beside his father in the rusty, one-horse chaise that conveyed the Man in Spectacles to his different haunts. Mr. Tooke, senior, had apparently his own reasons for satisfaction, and they drove on for some time in silence, each engrossed by his own pleasant thoughts. Presently the father began, with a curious chuckle:—

"Well, Ned, what are you thinking of? Miss Alice, I'll be bound."

Edward started, and the blush which overspread his features proved that his father's surmise had been correct.

"There's a pretty girl for you," pursued Mr. Tooke, whose tongue was unaccountably loosed from its usual reticence, "the finest figure in the county,—and a fortune in keeping, Ned, my boy," added the old man, pointing his words with an emphatic nudge.

"Well, father, what are Miss Chesney's figure and fortune to me?"

"What are they to you, Ned? They may both be yours some day, if you play your cards rightly. You've made a hit, with that sarmon of yours. Both her ladyship and Mr. Chesney say 'they never heard a more promising young man in the pulpit,' and that's something from the Rector, Ned; and as for Miss Alice, if that smile of hers don't mean something, I'm a blind beetle."

"I'm afraid you are, father, in this instance," replied Edward, smiling at Mr. Tooke's favourite mode of asseveration; "do you really imagine that Miss Chesney would look at an insignificant little fellow like me?" Poor Edward! his plainness was occasionally a "thorn in the flesh."

"So far as my experience goes, Ned," said Mr. Tooke, carefully balancing the whip on Toby's back—"so far as my experience goes, the ugliest men always get the handsomest women. I don't know why it should be so, but you'll find it almost invariably the case. It's something in a woman's nature, I suppose; either she wants to have all the good looks on her own side, and so chooses a plain hus-

band on purpose, or else she takes compassion on him—beauty is everything to the sex, you know—and tries to make up in herself what's been denied to him. I'm not much to look at myself, and didn't I get the prettiest girl in Tredhill, and cut out that six-footer, Tom Smith! You didn't know him, by the bye; but he was a handsome fellow; he ran off from home and enlisted in the Guards in despair. Never say die, Ned! *I* know the women, and I know what Miss Alice's eyes said. Bless my heart alive! it *do* seem astounding, to think of your being able to win by half an hour's talking what Sir Marmaduke Dale won't get in all his life, not if he were to seek it on his knees. I don't wear my green glasses for nothing, Ned, depend upon that! and *I* saw the haughty airs my little lady showed to poor Sir Marmaduke when her father was looking the other way. It's plain enough whom the Rector wishes for a son-in-law; but, mark my words, Miss Alice is a Chesney, every inch, and in the end she will please herself. So don't let your spirits go down, Ned."

Edward had been listening with quiet amusement to his father's prognostications; he saw now the real cause of Mr. Tooke's anxiety that he should accompany him that afternoon to the Rectory.

"Well, father, granted that Miss Chesney smiled upon me, what do you suppose the Rector, with his aristocratic connections, would say to me?"

"I suppose that one man's as good as another, Ned. You don't know exactly *who* your ancestors were, but you must have had as many as Mr. Chesney, that's a fact, and you have as large a share in Adam and Eve as ever the Rector had; though, I dare say, he'd like to prove the contrary. But now-a-days, Ned, 'tis not what a man's grandfather, or even what his father was, 'tis what he himself *is*. There's the rub, Ned, and if you will take my advice, you'll give up those coarse sailors, and try for a curacy in some fashionable West-end church in London, just to polish you up a bit, and to break you of that confounded habit of blushing. It would improve you vastly; though perhaps you'd never acquire the Rector's grand air. After all, there is something in *blood*," continued Mr. Tooke, reflectively: "when a man has been accustomed to lord it ever since his birth, 'tis but natural that he should know how to carry his head. But do you be guided by me, Ned, and I'll live to see Miss Alice, Mrs. Edward Tooke, and you Rector of Ilmington, yet. Won't your mother be a proud woman that day, poor soul!"

Book the Third.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE YOUNG PROFESSOR.

THE long vacation came and went. It was spent by both Arnold and Robert at Kirchenstein, for much as the latter would have liked to visit Ilmington on Alice's account, he dreaded lest an encounter with his uncle should put all his good resolutions to flight. "As long as I am at a distance, I am tolerably safe," he reasoned; "but fancy me shut up with my uncle for days together, through bad weather, or anything of that sort! I should be certain to offend him in some way, and then it would be all up with me, for I'm too old now to stand being lectured like a school-boy. Besides, I don't want another dose of Shakespere."

Arnold was also of opinion that the uncle and nephew were best apart. He accordingly invited Robert to take up his quarters at the Hunting Lodge, with the proviso that he must expect to "rough it"—the widow's domestic arrangements being on a somewhat different scale from those at the Rectory, or even at Dr. Frank's. Robert laughingly took the hint, left his valet behind him in Städtlein, and prepared to brave the unknown hardships of German country life.

Whether these hardships existed at all, and whether, on the whole, it was not "rather jolly to be just a *little* poor," were problems that occupied much of his attention after his return, for it seemed to him that this visit was the pleasantest he had ever paid; but then, it must be confessed that at this epoch Robert, like his favourite David Copperfield, was very *young*, and possibly a few years later the simple life at Kirchenstein might have appeared to him tame and insipid in the highest degree. As it was, however, he made himself thoroughly at home; seemed never to tire of dilating upon Arnold's merits to his mother, who, on her part, was never tired of listening; talked international politics with the pastor, and domestic gossip with his wife; sense with Mariechen, and nonsense with Lili; helped the former to churn the butter, and made dolls for the latter; declared black bread and vinegar-steeped meat to be his favourite articles of diet; and pronounced the thin wine superior to Tokay.

What wonder that, ere many days had passed Robert was second only to Arnold in the general esteem! To the two girls, who had never been beyond the precincts of their native village, his visit was a positive excitement, which culminated in a grand discovery on his part, namely, that he, Robert Chesney, was first cousin to Madame Müller, consequently, second cousin to themselves.

The reader may remember that on Arnold's meeting

with the Rector he had been struck by the unaccountable idea that the party were not strangers to him, that he had seen them before, and again the same feeling had occurred to him in connection with Robert. Strange to say, it was shared by the latter, who asserted that Madame Müller strongly resembled his father, a notion which was certainly borne out by a portrait of Sir Edward in his possession, for the likeness was so striking that it could hardly be accounted for in any other way than by supposing the mother of Madame Müller to have been none other than the missing Kate Chesney, whose story Robert had often heard—not from his uncle, indeed, but from the old housekeeper, who, in her girlhood, had been lady's maid to the runaway. On the strength of this hypothesis, Robert set up a claim to relationship, which he endeavoured to substantiate from the small store of trinkets and other relics that had belonged to Madame Müller's mother. However, no further proof was forthcoming, Madame herself being quite in the dark, both parents having died when she was still a child, leaving her among strangers, who could give her so little information regarding them that she did not even know her mother's maiden name. Robert was, therefore, forced to base his theory of cousinship on the evidence afforded by brow and nose, both of which, he insisted, were in themselves "proof positive."

The last few weeks of the vacation were enlivened

by the arrival of the family at the castle. Society was scarce in those parts, but the young Count, Max von Kirchenstein, had no mind to play the anchorite. He had become acquainted with Robert at college, and was not long in discovering that the Lodge possessed an attraction superior even to his lively fellow-student; and, thanks to Mariechen's dark eyes, the young men enjoyed some capital sport, for Max's tactics were worthy of a Bismarck, and he sought to impress the sister favourably by showing attention to the brother.

Marie was not destined, however, to remain long the ornament of Kirchenstein. Her uncle Andreas (whose wife had died a short time after Dr. Müller) found the solitude of his mansion unbearable, and pressed his sister-in-law so strongly to allow his eldest niece to reside with him, that Madame Müller at length consented; and it was settled that Mariechen should pass the ensuing winter in Berlin, greatly to her own satisfaction, if not to that of her brother, who in vain protested against the step. Marie was a young lady of an independent turn of mind, quite capable of thinking and acting for herself. From her childhood she had laid out her own path, and walked in it with a calm reticence which grieved as well as amazed Madame Müller, whose gentle nature was wounded by her daughter's apparent want of sympathy; for never to her ear had Mariechen entrusted any of those confidences which, coming from

a child, are so sweet to a mother ; and often in secret she bemoaned the tacit *misunderstanding* that existed between them, and wished that Arnold had been the girl, to remain always at her side, and Mariechen the boy, to go out into the world.

"I fear your old home will possess few attractions for you after a winter in Berlin, Marie," she said sadly, as they sat together in the twilight the last evening. "You will forget us all."

"That is too bad, cousin," interposed Robert ; "that is just one of my uncle's speeches. He is always expecting me to do something unnatural—always on the look-out, as it were, for something wrong ; so of course I do it, to gratify him. Why should you imagine that Mariechen could forget you ?"

The mother sighed, and Marie's pretty lip curled slightly, but she made no response. Next morning the three took their departure, accompanied by Graf Max, who had suddenly discovered the necessity of his immediate presence on important business in Berlin. Arnold saw his sister safely to her destination, exchanged a few frigid words with his uncle, and then turned his face with a sigh of relief in the direction of Städtlein. He found the old house deserted by all except the Alte ; but in a few days the Director, his sister, and Mala, returned from Switzerland, Wallraf from Russia, his usual autumn haunt, and things resumed their old course, with this im-

portant difference, that Arnold entered at once upon his duties as Herr Bergmann's lieutenant.

The Conservatorium at Städtlein was of old standing, and frequented by students from all parts of the world. The direction of it in matters musical and æsthetical was entrusted to Herr Bergmann; financially and materially it was managed by a committee of noblemen and gentlemen. This form of government worked better than is usually found to be the case with a dual administration, simply because the committee, individually and as a whole, had the good sense to abstain from meddling interference, and the dilettante influence thus kept in abeyance was productive of more good than if it had been injudiciously suffered to override the professional. At the time of Arnold's connection with the Academy, it had probably reached the zenith of its fame, for under a chief like Herr Bergmann several were content to accept subordinate positions who would have "played second fiddle" to no other man. Arnold found reason to rejoice in having gained Wallraf as a friend, for, had he chosen, that gentleman might have rendered him sufficiently uncomfortable; and, in fact, his position as the Director's deputy would have been hardly tenable but for the warm support and kindly spirit manifested towards him by his old adversary and two other colleagues, Herren Schenk and von Heintz.

Schenk we have already introduced to the reader, and have little further to add respecting him, except that the more Arnold knew of him the more he liked him, and learned to respect the genuine goodness hidden beneath a somewhat rough exterior. Schenk was blessed with but small means, and a large family; and his good-nature involved him in a constant web of anxiety and trouble. Rascally sons-in-law were perpetually borrowing money from him, never to be repaid—except with interest in the shape of swarms of miniature likenesses of themselves, who were billeted indefinitely on grandpapa. Nevertheless, honest Schenk failed to perceive the unreasonableness of such proceedings, and toiled unceasingly at the dreary work of teaching, to fill the hungry little mouths gaping at home.

The only time he could find for the practice of his beloved art was the unearthly hour of three in the morning, when, winter and summer, the groaning of his violoncello might have been heard by stray passers by. What wonder, then, that when the evening arrived, Schenk was not very wide-awake? There is even a tradition on record that on one occasion, at a concert in the town-hall, he had played the overture to William Tell while fast asleep—a fact that was ascertained by the profound snores emanating from his corner. Take him for all in all, however, Schenk, if not a genius, was a thoroughly honest man and a conscientious teacher, and,

as such, he was beloved by several generations of pupils.

Von Heintz was a constant frequenter of the Director's house, although we have not yet happened to meet him there, and between him and Arnold there was a strong bond of friendship. This gentleman differed from his colleagues in one respect, viz., that while their professional work arose mainly from necessity, his was a matter of choice. He was, in fact, a volunteer. Like Mendelssohn, he had the option of leading a life in entire accordance with his tastes and fancies, whatever those might be, irrespective of the pecuniary considerations which, unfortunately, dictate a certain course to most of us; but, like the great composer also, he scorned to take advantage of the inglorious ease bequeathed him by an accident of fortune, and devoted himself to the pursuit of art with an ardour fully equal to that of his brethren who were dependent on the result of personal exertion for their daily bread. It is not to be denied, that he had been received with a certain amount of coldness by the latter when he first came among them. It was, perhaps, only natural that they should regard with a little jealousy one who started in the race for fame with advantages apparently vastly superior to theirs—abundance of leisure, freedom from harassing cares, and the *entrée* to society the most select. Not a few prophesied evil consequences to the art as practised in their

midst, by this infusion of the quasi-amateur element, and watched with the utmost vigilance for any attempt on the part of the new-comer to introduce "chimerical notions," or lower in any way the severely-classical standard so long and honourably maintained at Städtlein.

As time went on, however, these prejudices vanished: von Heintz managed to conciliate even the most exacting of his censors by his genuine enthusiasm, the scholarly compositions he produced, his entire absence of assumption, and real goodness of heart; and although a little professional annoyance might fairly have been excused on the occasion of his being singled out to receive at the hands of royalty a distinction to which other artists of less aristocratic birth had equal claims, the discontent at the partiality in high places soon subsided, and von Heintz met with as many and as hearty congratulations on the event as he could possibly have wished. Nevertheless, a trace of dilettanteism certainly pervaded the whole of his proceedings; and it seems to us that the musicians considerably over-estimated the enviableness of his position as compared to their own.

Poverty is a great curse, but it is also a great blessing; and to its vigorous spur the intellectual world probably owes no small part of its undying masterpieces. Doubtless, there are those who, Goethe-like, have no need of such a stimulus—

those whose nature it is to give out, to create, to whom inaction would be impossible—and to the last class belonged von Heintz; but, even admitting this, the greater leisure, higher culture, and brilliant social position he enjoyed, were, in one sense, so many stumbling-blocks in the path to artistic excellence. He could not launch a work upon the world to sink or swim by its own merits like one impelled by stern necessity—like the drowning seaman who stakes his chance for life upon a final effort. It must be cast and recast, refined and embellished, until in its author's esteem it was worthy of him, not only as an artist, but as a scholar; and not only as a scholar, but as a man of the world; and the wonder is that, amid so many conflicting interests, von Heintz should have succeeded in producing works of any artistic merit whatever. So high did his reputation stand, however, that, at the time we make his acquaintance, many little foibles peculiar to the dilettante (as for instance, his zeal for the building up of what he termed the "Temple of Art," his over-anxiety for the progress of his pupils, his desire to indoctrinate them with his own peculiar views, and his constant discoveries of prodigies amongst their number) were accepted as matters of course by the formerly jealous colleagues; and although the Temple of Art suffered a temporary collapse every now and again by the musical phoenix proving to be nothing more than a common lark, the occurrence

elicited—even from Wallraf—only a smile at “Von Heintz’s hobbies.”

Städtlein, like all other German musical cities, boasted an immense number of private choral and instrumental societies. At the head of the former stood that directed by von Heintz, and devoted to the exclusive study of sacred works. To belong to this society was the *ne plus ultra* of amateur fame, since none but those possessed of indisputable ability received the honour of an invitation to join its ranks, and the claims of each new aspirant to membership were as jealously discussed as though the well-being of the State hung upon the decision. It is to be feared that the St. Cecilians, as a body, were not imbued with the discretion of their leader; they fancied their society the aristocratic and governing element in the musical republic of Städtlein, greatly to the disgust of those who found themselves summarily classed amongst the commonalty; and, in fact, had it not been for the tact displayed by von Heintz, the Patroness of Harmony might soon have served as an emblem of Discord. While he held the bâton, however, the sister societies willingly accorded a certain pre-eminence to the St. Cecilians as leading the van courageously in many tough engagements between the believers in Finality and those who, like the Städtleiners, contended for a fair hearing for every man and the doctrine of Progress. Arnold and Mala were both members of this society, and

during the winter, the office of secretary falling vacant, the former was unanimously selected to fill it.

As we have said, the support of these three influential leaders of thought in the little community was of no small importance to our hero, who might otherwise have found some difficulty in maintaining his ground among the students, who were, many of them, much older than himself, and all inclined to test somewhat scornfully the powers of so young an instructor. A considerable amount of tact and forbearance had, therefore, to be exercised on his part before he became, as he ultimately did, generally popular; but, at the same time, this result was attained with less trouble and delay than would have accompanied a similar effort in England.

Amongst our German brethren, there is, on the whole, less of the spirit of rivalry than with ourselves—rivalry, that is to say, in its worst sense. They are quicker to discern rising talent; more ready to bestow an impartial examination on its claims; more willing to extend the right hand of friendship to a fellow-worker than we in England—possibly because the life-blood flows more evenly and calmly through Teutonic veins; possibly, also, because with them the wideness of the field for intellectual exertion is more generally recognised, while the individual striving after a higher self-culture—the attempt to realize an ideal peculiar to

the German—goes far to prevent the harbouring of petty jealousies. Each is so much in earnest in the race, that he has no time to jostle his neighbour off the course; he can but bid him good-speed, and renew his own exertions, content to leave to time the solution of the problem, which shall arrive first at the goal—perhaps indifferent to it altogether. That ambition of all kinds is not latent in the German temperament as in the English, cannot for a moment be maintained, but it seems to us that it develops itself in forms less obnoxious.

With the rest of his colleagues Arnold was speedily on good terms. They were all, without exception, artists of repute, greater or less—with names known beyond the confines of Städtlein; but were we to attempt to bring each personally upon our canvas, time would fail us, and patience—the reader. Three only must be particularized. The first of these, Herr Streicher, second professor of the violin, was Arnold's special abhorrence. He was a man little in stature, great in his own esteem, who seemed perpetually halting between two opinions, and unable to make up his mind as to whether he would devote his talents to art or literature, the relative merits of which were so evenly balanced in his judgment that it is hard to tell which preponderated. A staunch supporter of the Städtlein Shakespere Society, he brought forward every year some hypothesis regarding the great dramatist

astounding enough to set the Thames on fire, had it been uttered in England; and he had even published, at his own expense, an elaborate treatise, to which the spare hours of many months had been devoted, utterly annihilating the critique on Hamlet in "Wilhelm Meister," and proving to his own satisfaction the impossibility of Goethe's being a fair exponent of Shakespere. But alas! the pamphlet, fondly designed to make its author take rank as a second Gervinus, fell to the ground dead-born, and poor Streicher heard so often the proverb, "Cobbler, stick to your last!" that for a time literature kicked the beam. No sooner was the bitterness of defeat a little mitigated by time, however, than the fiddle went up in the scale, and he re-entered the lists with unabated ardour—on this occasion as an opponent of all foreign influencers in general, and Shakespere in particular; and when last we heard of him he was engaged on a voluminous work intended to show up the English bard as the prince of plagiarists, indebted for every plot, whim, and fancy to Bocaccio or Plutarch.

Very different from this individual was an elderly man of the name of Braun, known among the students, in spite of his grey hairs, by the pseudonyme of Old Sag. He was a tall, thin, silent man, with a peculiar stoop and shuffling gait, always out at elbows, but none the less pervaded by an indescribable air of faded gentility—of having known

better days. "Old Sag" Arnold discovered after a time to be a corruption of Sagittarius, and an allusion to what was understood to be his only recreation—shooting with a bow and arrows. He was commonly reputed to inhabit, from preference, a room in the topmost story of an immensely high house, and to have received six notices to quit in as many weeks from incensed landladies, whose favourite tabbies had been immolated on the leads in mistake for stray sparrows. In the same way, his extreme attenuation was declared to be the result of his reviving the old Balearic practice, and vowing never to eat until he had brought down, or at least hit, the meal slung by himself as a target on a neighbouring chimney-pot in default of the customary tree. But taking into account Herr Braun's exceedingly weak sight, which necessitated the constant use of spectacles, Arnold was inclined to believe the whole story a myth invented by some wag.

Herr Braun figured in the list of professors as a teacher of harmony, but his real position was not so definite; he seemed a mere supernumerary, expected to make himself generally useful and to be at everybody's beck and call. Did one of the leading professors absent himself for a few days, to electrify the musical public at a distance, Old Sag was ready to take his place—no matter what the subject of instruction; was an organist confined to the house by a touch of rheumatism, Old Sag's tottering limbs were

nimble enough to carry him to any church, in time for the service, at a quarter of an hour's notice ; did the horn-player suddenly discover himself afflicted by a sore throat at the very moment when he ought to have been above such a weakness, the elongated cheeks of the supernumerary willingly distended in his stead.

In short, there was nothing that Old Sag could not or would not do to turn an honest penny. He had evidently received the education of a gentleman, yet he never refused to perform offices the most menial ; he assisted the librarian to maintain order, and submitted patiently to the practical jokes of the younger students ; he cast up accounts and signed receipts—seldom in his own favour ; he was equally ready to play an accompaniment or blow the organ-bellows ; to examine a fugue, or go on an errand ; to act as copyist, or produce an original work—in short, a more helpless, helpful, innocent, curious riddle never existed. Nobody knew much about him, or cared to know ; he never uttered a complaint, or entered into conversation with anybody regarding himself, and had gone on his silent, lonely way for years before the advent of Arnold, even the Director failing to draw him out of his shell, or induce him to throw off his reserve. His patient face and threadbare coat touched the sensibility of our hero so keenly, that he felt their existence a reproach to himself and the Conservatorium in general. After pondering for some time on the best way of assist-

ing the old man without hurting his feelings, he managed to abstract from his desk a few of the manuscript pieces with which it was stored, had them printed, and then persuaded each of his friends to buy half-a-dozen copies. The proceeds of this little speculation he carried joyfully one November evening to Old Sag's dwelling. It was not yet eight o'clock, but Herr Braun had already retired to bed, doubtless for warmth, since, although the weather was piercingly cold, the room boasted no stove. At Arnold's unexpected entrance he looked up with a startled air, as if he feared it might be the bailiff come to take possession ; and, when finally made to understand that the little heap of gold was for him, hid his head beneath the ragged counterpane and wept like a child. These tears spoke more eloquently than words, and they were the only thanks Arnold got for his pains ; nor had he even the satisfaction of seeing Old Sag in a warm coat, for he continued to give his lessons as shabbily dressed as ever. But after a time, after a humble funeral had issued from the high house, there began to be rumours of a little old sister who had lived in another garret for years, bedridden, and entirely maintained by Herr Braun ; and there must have been truth in *this* story at least, for when some months had elapsed (during which he gradually lost his skeleton look) Herr Braun appeared in a suit so dazzlingly new, that his best friends did not know him, and even the boldest

urchin hesitated to accost him by the familiar nickname.

Third and last, but by no means least, comes the professor of singing, the Signora Eschino, a loud-voiced, sallow-complexioned, black-ringleted lady, who kept a meek little husband in complete subjection, besides some forty or fifty pupils, who trembled at her nod and wept their eyes red at her frown.

This personage was Wallraf's bugbear; he had not exchanged half-a-dozen words with her during the ten years in which they had worked together, and to avoid meeting her in the street he would make a detour of three or four miles. To tell the truth, the head and front of the Signora's offending in his eyes, was her sex; for if she had been an angel in feminine guise, and still persisted in retaining her office at the music school, he would barely have tolerated her. In his judgment, women had no right to presume to teach the divine art; their place was dutifully to sing the small part assigned to them by some lord of the creation, and then subside into silence and obscurity. Such a *rôle* would by no means have suited the Signora, who considered herself equal, if not superior, to any professor in the Conservatorium, not only on account of her abilities but of her nation, which, she contended, was the only musical race under the sun, adding (if Wallraf happened to be within earshot), that "for her part, she could not see why people should make such a fuss

about the Tedescan music—strum, strum, strum!—thump, thump, thump!—no flow, no melodia!—and as for that Beethoven!—bah! to play him required no more genius than the knitting of a stocking!” In short, there was war to the knife between the two; and Wallraf would cheerfully have resigned all the emoluments connected with his professorship, provided she could have been got rid of. There was little hope of that, however. The Signora knew her own value, and could set the whole world at defiance. In her way, she was as indispensable as Wallraf, for by dint of alternately stamping her foot at her scholars, and scolding them in interjectional phrases, wherein the *diavolo* figured prominently, she succeeded in developing and mellowing the harsh “throaty” German voices in a way achieved by no other teacher.

On the wall of the Director’s private room hung a mirror, the use of which was as follows. No sooner had a new recruit received an initiatory lesson from the Signora, than, a few minutes after, the Director was sure to hear a tap at his door, followed by the entrance of the victim, in tears, declaring that it was impossible she could study under the Signora! that she could not stand such treatment; she had never been used to it; she must appeal to the committee, &c., &c.

“But, my dear young lady,” the Director would interpose soothingly, when the torrent had spent

itself, "calm yourself, and let me hear what it is all about. What did she say to you?"

"Ach! Herr Director, what did she *not* say to me? Such dreadful names!" (with a fresh burst). "In Italian, too!"

"But how do you know what the names mean, if she used Italian?"

"They must be bad, I'm sure, from the way she looked at me. One was *ran—ran*—something; I forget the rest."

"*Ranella*, perhaps?" said the Director, who from long experience knew the Signora's vocabulary by heart.

"Yes! that was it. All the girls say it means something horrid."

"Pooh, nonsense! it signifies little frog," the Director would reply, awaiting with a smile the blank look that invariably flitted across the complainant's face at a comparison so odious.

"Little demon," after all, would not have been so bad—but a nasty, vile, slimy, croaking toad!!!

"Come, Fräulein!" Herr Bergmann would add, when the first effects of the shock had worn off, gallantly conducting the injured one to the before-mentioned mirror, "I do not see anything particularly frog-like in your appearance—do you?" a question which, gravely put, never failed to restore smiles and good humour; and the fair vocalist would return from her interview greatly strengthened by

the Director's sympathy, and ready to face a dozen Signoras, if necessary.

We have hinted that at first Arnold found his task no easy one. German students are credited with an unusual flow of animal spirits, and in this respect the musicians were neither better nor worse than their brethren the theologians. If a professor succeeded in gaining their esteem, they were ready to go through fire and water for him; if, on the other hand, he showed symptoms of weakness or incapacity, they were equally ready to turn the tables, and apply the fire-and-water ordeal to him so effectively, that, in order to escape persecution, he was compelled to resign. The influence of active thinkers and workers, such as Wallraf and von Heintz, was, of course, felt throughout the whole community, and, while productive of much good, displayed itself in the usual form of violent partisanship. Wallraf's pupils were known as Beethovenites; von Heintz's as Bachites; the Director's as followers of Mozart—and so on indefinitely, each party being distinguished by its peculiar badge and colour; the Beethovenites laid claim to the purple, type of sovereignty; the Bachites affected white, symbol of purity; while the Mozartians took refuge in blue—emblem of what they were pleased to call “spirituality.”

While the ladies confined themselves to such manifestations, the gentlemen were not equally

moderate, but lampooned their rivals without mercy; the leaders of each sect (Herr Bergmann alone excepted) coming in for a share of sarcasm after a fashion that excited Wallraf's intense wrath. In his opinion, the discipline maintained by the Director was lax—miserably lax; were *he* principal, he would institute a new order of things, and exact a military obedience from every one under his sway.

"No doubt you would," the Director replied, in answer to one of the many arguments addressed to him by Wallraf on the subject, "and you would assuredly arrive at one of three conditions: either your students would be a set of puppets, or of hypocrites; or, as a final result, they would all desert, and leave you alone in your glory." And acting upon his own theory of education, which left the young people unfettered in all non-essential points, the Director had the satisfaction of knowing that he was regarded with perfect confidence by every one in the institution; that he would be the first to hear of anything going wrong—from the individual himself; and that hundreds looked back upon their student-years at Städtlein as the happiest period of their lives.

While allowing the utmost latitude as regards their method of teaching to the several professors, the Director took care to supplement the general instruction given by a few words from himself. For this purpose he was in the habit of assembling the

whole of the students together once a week, for the delivery of a short lecture on Art in its higher aspects; and probably not the dullest among his hearers but was moved to a momentary flash of life, as Herr Bergmann pointed out with kindling eloquence the high standpoint of music as a refining, ennobling influence, and the obligation devolving upon every one who accepted its cultivation as a life-mission, to develop his own powers, to be in perfect sympathy with the pure and true, that in turn he might exert that influence to its fullest extent upon others. And not seldom in the midst of his little oration was the Director interrupted by enthusiastic cheers, which proved, that if he could not mould his students after an orderly, routine pattern, he could at least touch the string that set the whole machine in motion.

CHAPTER XV.

ROBERT AND HIS ANCESTORS.

IN addition to his work at the music school, Arnold still continued his own studies, and the little leisure he had was all the more precious to him on this account. It was therefore with some annoyance that he returned the greeting of Robert one evening, as he coolly invaded his sanctum, and ensconced himself *sans cérémonie* by the window.

"All right, old fellow! fire away! I won't interrupt you," he said. "I don't understand a note you play, but that doesn't signify. Where ignorance is bliss—you know. After all," he added irreverently, "I'm not so bad as old Swift. I *do* see some difference between your tweedle-dum and other people's tweedle-dee; when I've been listening to you for half-an-hour, I feel up to the heroics—to any extent."

"You certainly look very heroic," returned Arnold, "lounging comfortably on my two best chairs, with 'Pickwick' in your hand. But take warning! if you begin to whistle, I shall have to ask you to walk downstairs. This must be got ready for Wallraf."

"Hang Wallraf!" said Robert, discontentedly ; "although it seems to me that, so far as you are concerned, that operation is performed on him already. He is always suspended over you like what's-his-name's sword, whenever a fellow wants you to be a little jolly and sociable."

"If you can't make a better pun than that, I should recommend you to abstain entirely," said Arnold, as he turned to the piano again.

For five minutes Robert kept his promise, but at the end of that time Arnold was startled by a burst of laughter.

"Robert!" he expostulated, "I knew how it would be, if I allowed you to remain here."

"I really am a nigger, Arnold ; but I cannot help it. Do look here ! this is a new illustrated edition of Dickens which I've just bought. Here's Pickwick trotting along as fast as his little legs will carry him at the review, both lines advancing on him, and he don't know how to get out of the way. By Jove ! it's killing ! There he is, gaiters and all, and the fat boy grinning behind the chicken-pie ! Won't you look ? You *are* savage to-night ; I thought no one could withstand old P. Well, go ahead ! I won't disturb you again."

In a few seconds there was a second explosion ; this time the old gentleman was on the ice.

Arnold shut the piano with a bang ; the Sonata Appassionata and Pickwick scarcely harmonized.

"I really did not mean to make you stop," said Robert, "but it's getting late; the dinner-bell will ring in a minute."

"Not for half-an-hour," returned Arnold with sufficient good humour; he knew by experience how useless would be any attempt to dislodge Robert. "I must rise the earlier to-morrow morning. Shall we go downstairs?"

"'Barkis is willing'! I can read 'Pickwick' at home, and I want to have some fun with the Fräulein now, and see how many 'bulls' I can make her swallow."

"Only don't go too far! I won't have aunt Martha laughed at, I warn you."

When they reached the drawing-room, where the ladies were sitting at work, aunt Martha (who held in her hand the inevitable worsted stocking, without which no elderly German lady is ever seen) accosted Robert with: "Good even-ing, Sare Robert! me 'ope you to-day you right vell find? Me begin your tong kvite flowing to spik—not true?" This was the extent of aunt Martha's English; and that she had arrived at so respectable a degree of proficiency was due only to unceasing efforts on the part of Robert.

"Capital, Fräulein! first-rate!" responded that ingenuous youth encouragingly; "you'll soon rival my man Friday;" a compliment which pleased the good lady amazingly.

"Ah!" she continued complacently in German,

"I always fancied that I had a natural turn for languages. I find no difficulty whatever in making a bargain with those gipsy fellows who come to the door selling fowls, and attempting to cheat one in their frightful *patois*." (The truth is, aunt Martha's mode of dealing with the gipsies was to lay down the sum she proposed to give for the desired fowl, and, jealously keeping one hand over it, gesticulate with the other between the two, until the vendor in despair generally watched for an unguarded moment to make a dart at the money, and retreat in triumph, leaving behind the skinniest of hostages.) "But when I was young, it was not considered necessary for girls to learn any language but their own."

"Some people think so still," said Mala, with a sigh.

"Come, Mala, you have no reason to complain now," returned Arnold; "you speak French very nicely, and English too, considering the opportunities you have had of learning."

"Yes; I speak and understand English a little, Arnold; but I cannot read it. Spoken and written English are so very different."

"What do you mean? Has your father put his veto upon English next?" inquired Robert.

"Yes; I am never to open an English book alone, because my head ached a little last week," replied Mala, half laughing, half crying; "papa says I may read a little with you."

"Hm!" said Robert; "I suppose he thinks you

run no chance of over-study with me! Very complimentary! Well, we'll begin the immortal P. this very evening; here he is, all ready. But I must say, your father is very unreasonable. You are the first German girl I ever met who could not fire away in several languages besides her own."

"Shame! Robert, that is not fair!" said Arnold, coming to the rescue, for Mala's discomfiture at this speech was excessive. "Your notion of our girls' accomplishments is as ridiculous as the idea here with regard to the general appearance of your countrywomen."

"What is that?"

"Why, the typical Englishwoman is as tall as a lamp-post, and nearly as slender; wears her hair in corkscrew ringlets (*à l'Anglaise*, as we say); tramps about in all weathers, and is never seen in anything but a waterproof cloak reaching down to her heels."

Bravo!" said Robert, laughing, "I shall sketch that to-morrow for Alice's benefit, and entitle it 'Miss Chesney, as she appeared on the Grand Tour;' she was rather proud of a waterproof suit, in which she used to scramble among the mountains. Now, Mala, don't be angry at what I said; it's not your fault, you know, and by the time you've finished 'Pickwick,' you'll cut out all the other girls in Städtlein. Come and read a little before that mar-joy Wallraf turns up."

They had not read many lines, however, before

the mar-joy appeared in search of his pet; and Robert closed the book in vexation.

"I hope you are not initiating my little Mala into your uncouth vernacular, Sir Robert," began Wallraf.

"I am teaching her English, sir," retorted Robert, hotly, "and as for the *uncouthness* of the language, I must trouble you not to apply that epithet to it again in my hearing."

"Language! *dialect*, you mean. What is your English, but a cross between the Scandinavian and the Dutch?"

"You dare to call the language of Milton and of Chaucer a *dialect*?" said Robert, with flashing eyes.

"Certainly I do, for want of a better term."

It is not probable that Wallraf was here expressing his real sentiments; for though he did not speak English fluently, he was well read in its literature, and had long been one of the most ardent members of the Städtlein Shakespere Society. His sole aim was to draw forth the absurdly zealous patriotism which in Robert had developed itself into a sixth sense, ever on the alert to scent out and avenge any fancied slight to the glory of England, the most innocently-meant remark disparaging to his fatherland being sufficient to explode a whole magazine of braggadocio squibs and crackers, greatly to Wallraf's amusement.

"Take a handmill," continued that gentleman, watching the effect produced, "put in so much Celtic, so much Saxon, so much Latin, French, and Greek

—the philologists will tell you the proportions to a particle—turn the handle once, twice, thrice, and you have English ready-made.”

“By Jove! Herr von Wallraf, you will not dare to speak thus to me ten years hence! At present I have not your scholarship, and if I were to attempt to prove my point, you would trip me up, or drive me into a corner by some of your confounded subtleties. But this I maintain, and I challenge you and all the world to confute it, that mine is the grandest language under the sun! We English know what we are about; we have taken the best part, the cream, from the speech of all nations, and formed for ourselves a language which as far surpasses every other as—as—”

“As the English people surpass every other race!” concluded Wallraf. “Well, you are an Englishman, and it is but natural you should defend your mother tongue; but during these ten years, after which we are to meet each other on equal ground, let me advise you to analyze for yourself this *crème de la crème* of tongues. To me it appears the climax of the confusion that began at Babel. Other nations have contented themselves with one homogeneous mode of expression. (Compare French, Italian, the romance tongues in general, or even our German, with the English.) You Britons, on the contrary, went to work on your language as on other things: here taking by force a little bit from the Celts, there

filching from the Latins, now despoiling the Greeks, and anon, as usual, having to submit to a good drubbing from your Norman conquerors, along with a nauseous dose of French. And what is the result? a heterogeneous patchwork—a harsh, cacophonic, structureless jumble, which sounds to the ear of a foreigner only a degree less objectionable than the flattest and most insipid of languages—Dutch.”

It is impossible to describe the rage and mortification produced in Robert by this tirade. He knew, that for want of the requisite technical knowledge it was impossible for him to compete with Wallraf; and while he inwardly vowed to enter without delay on the philological course at the University, that he might train himself for the arena of scholarly debate, he was compelled to content himself for the present with clenching his fist, and muttering that, “if Englishmen *had* stolen their language, they knew at least how to keep it, like everything else, and to get more, too, from the same quarters, if they wanted it.”

“Be warned in time, Mala,” continued Wallraf, delighted at his success, “the pronunciation is the vilest in the world, I assure you—without rhyme or reason. Just take a case in point, look at the letters *t, o, u, g, h*; combine them, what do they make? *toof*; insert another *h*, what have you now? *doe*; supply an *r*, and you find a third metamorphose into *doo*. Bah! don’t talk to me of English!”

At this juncture the bell rang, fortunately; for Robert could not even afford to laugh at Wallraf's pronunciation, and was overheard by Arnold muttering a threat, in his much-abused mother-tongue, wherein the mysterious and apparently disconnected words, "Dark night—catch him alone—Dandie—calf of leg—no more humbug!" were distinctly audible.

After dinner, when Robert had fairly recovered his temper, Fräulein Martha began upon her favourite topic with him—the ocean, and marine experiences in general. All her life aunt Martha had passed in an inland province, but she cherished in secret an intense longing to make a journey to the coast, and view for herself what struck her imagination as the most *grossartig* sight in creation. Not for ten thousand worlds would she openly have declared this *penchant*, for the good soul's fancied demerits as a manager, and general unworthiness, weighed too heavily upon her to allow of her accepting any additional kindness at her brother's hands; and she knew well that she had only to express the desire to have it gratified. Nevertheless, the project was her favourite day-dream, and every spare *kreutzer* that she could conscientiously appropriate to the purpose was laid aside for its realization. In the meantime, she hailed the advent of Robert, who, being an Englishman, would naturally regard the sea as his native element; and numerous were the inquiries

she addressed to him on the subject. It must be confessed that the answers she received were not a little calculated to damp her enthusiasm. According to Robert, not one man in a hundred came back alive from encountering the perils of the deep. The English Channel swarmed with monstrosities of all sorts and species, tropical as well as polar; whales came in shoals to London Bridge, and sharks had depopulated the Thames that a learned Society headed by eminent *savans* had banded themselves together for the express purpose of destroying the enemy and preserving the fish. On this evening in particular he entertained aunt Martha with a special dish of horrors.

"Dear me!" said the good lady, innocently, "what people you English must be! No wonder that you are a little inclined to boastfulness, after braving so many dangers! I declare I shall be quite frightened now, when I hear of any friends of mine being on the sea."

"Oh, no occasion for alarm, Fräulein, I assure you," returned Robert, patronisingly, "there's a way of humouring those queer fish. They like the flavour of anything glittering and bright, such as silver and gold. It must be substantial, you know, for they have a digestion like that of an ostrich, and I believe a solid lump, an Australian nugget for instance, pleases them best; but if you have not that at hand, a piece of money will do.—I'll tell you what happened to

my uncle once.—He had just arrived, from the Continent, at Blackwall (that's a mile or two from London), and the steamer, a very large one, was obliged to stick for some time in the middle of the river for some reason or other, I don't know what. My uncle had an appointment for a certain hour in town, so he grew tired of the delay, and what do you think he did?—Coaxed an enormous shark, which was paddling alongside, close to him, by holding a half sovereign just within reach of its mouth for bait, jumped on its back, and was taken ashore in less than no time! You see, these fish only gobble up smaller fry; they have a respect for any animal that walks upright and wears pockets."

"Bless me!" ejaculated aunt Martha, not a little dubious as to the discrimination shown by the denizens of English waters; while Mala exclaimed, indignantly, "Robert! how can you tease aunt Martha so?"

"Fact, upon my honour, Mala, you may see it any hour of the day at Blackwall. Of course, I can't answer for the sharks being equally complaisant elsewhere."

"Which do you admire most, Sir Robert, Gulliver or Baron Munchausen?" said the Director, who had come up unobserved, and been an amused auditor of Robert's yarn.

"Oh, the Baron by all means!" returned Robert, laughing; "he's a particular friend of mine; he it

was who first gave me the notion how to draw the long bow."

"Well, you've overshot your mark this time," said Arnold, "for you have missed aunt Martha."

"Nonsense, Fräulein! Aren't you greatly obliged to me for putting you up to the dodges of those monsters?"

"Ah, Sare Robert," said the Fräulein, with a shake of the head, "your tales grow altogether too wonderful; I have no more faith in you."

"There's gratitude!" cried Robert, pretending to be vastly indignant, "*and* politeness. You deserve to be fleeced by every land-shark that gets hold of you, Fräulein, for refusing to credit what I have told you of the amphibious kind.—By the way, Arnold, I am going to be very rude in my turn, and ask a question which no doubt you will think rather impertinent: what induced your parents to give you that particular name?"

"I really was hardly competent to judge of the discussion that preceded my baptism," replied Arnold, smiling; "do you not like it?"

"It's rather romantic, isn't it? not like Tom, or Fritz, or any name of that description."

"I don't know as to the name being romantic in itself, for *Arnolds* over here are as plentiful as blackberries, but the origin of it in our family is slightly so. We have a tradition that we are descended from Arnold von Melchthal, of Morgarten memory, but it

is nothing more than a tradition. I cannot explain how his progeny came to migrate from the Vierwaldstättersee to Berlin, or why they exchanged the mountain- for the countinghouse-life; but it was one of the first stories my poor father ever told me, and he believed in it implicitly."

"Ah! so you, too, have ancestors?" said Robert, pityingly.

"In your sense of the word, I have only this one; and I must say that my fancied relationship to him used to inspire me with great ardour for Schiller, when I was a boy."

"Well, you see, you have the divine spark, which I don't pretend to; my ancestors never succeeded in inspiring me with anything but hatred," said Robert; while Mala interposed, wonderingly:

"But what harm have they ever done you, Robert, beyond leaving you plenty of land and money?"

"Harm! they once nearly killed me."

"Killed you!" echoed Mala, in turn, her curiosity roused; "what can you possibly mean?"

"It is a long story, Mala, but I'll tell it you if you will come to some other room. I won't begin it here, with the chance of Wallraf laughing at every second word."

"Wallraf has gone away, I assure you, and papa is reading the newspaper; besides, he falls asleep regularly every five minutes, and would not hear if you were to fire off a cannon at his ear." (A slight smile that passed over the Director's face seemed to

contradict this assertion, but the young people did not notice it.) "Arnold is buried in his book, too, so there is nobody but aunt Martha, and she likes your stories,—don't you, aunt?"

Of course aunt Martha acquiesced as usual in whatever Mala chose to say, and Robert prefaced his tale with a "Now, Mala, mind, there's no nonsense about this; it's all true."

"So much the better. The only drawback to your stories generally is, that one has to wonder how much is invented."

"Well, then, Mala, sharpen your ears!—Once upon a time—"

"No, no," interrupted his auditor, "it can't be true with that beginning—once upon a time lived Cinderella and Tom Thumb."

"Very adorable little personages, too!—What shall I say then? In the year of the Christian era, eighteen hundred and——, there lived in an old castellated mansion, in a certain county in England, near the sea, a tiny boy, who was kept shut up by a grim, fierce ogre of a guardian. The small individual, of course, was myself—the tyrant, my respected uncle. Do you like that commencement?"

"Pretty well. But if you talk so much about yourself, Robert, you will never arrive at your ancestors."

"All in good time!—You need not get so hot about them, they will keep cold.—Well, Mala, to

proceed to business! as my uncle would say. I don't think that I was a nice little boy—not half so nice as I am now. You find me very tolerable, don't you?”

“Yes, yes, anything you like! Only go on.”

“In fact, when I think of myself in those days, I fancy I must have been a veritable imp—not of mischief (these are pleasant fellows), but of obstinacy, and what our old Scotch housekeeper used to call *dourness*, which means that in the good lady's estimation I was a sort of hybrid, between a sulky donkey and a mule. Altogether, I have no doubt I was an amiable specimen of a sucking baronet; but in self-justification, Mala, I must premise that I was a very weakly little chap, and often what the Rector called *obstinacy* was nothing but sheer inability to do what he expected of me, and I was too proud to complain to *him*. Nobody understood me but my aunt Mary, and I'd have done anything for her, simply because she never bullied me. On one occasion, when I was about eleven years old, she left home for a few days, taking my cousins with her. I fancy they went to consult some famous London doctor, but I was supposed to be quite well, and so remained behind with my uncle. That winter we were living at the Place (that's my house, or what's to be mine), for the Rectory was, as usual, undergoing repair. Well, Mala, you must know that my uncle taught us two boys himself, my poor cousin Walter and me; and I can say, without exaggeration, that

the most miserable hours of my life were passed in his study. When Walter was at home I got on better; for he knew how to humour his father, and contrived to shield me from many a punishment which, I dare say, I deserved. Now that I look back upon that time," continued Robert meditatively, "it strikes me that the Rector made a mistake in attempting to instruct us. Teaching was not his *forte*; but there is no doubt that he did it for the best, and he certainly made a splendid scholar of Walter. Even your glum old bigwigs over here, who consider me a reprobate, were forced to admit that he was an honour to the University, so long as he studied here.—But I must get on a little faster.—The week of my aunt's absence was a wretched one, both to my uncle and me; every day I sank lower and lower in his good graces, until at last I arrived at zero. It happened to be clear, frosty weather, about the end of February, the very thing for a *run*, so I was not surprised to hear, that on the morning of the day before my aunt was expected home, all the members of the Hunt who lived within a reasonable distance were to breakfast at the Place, preparatory to the Meet."

"What's that?"

"Don't you know what the Meet is, Mala? Where were you *raised*, that you have never seen a fox-hunt? When you come to visit me in England you shall have plenty of sport, I promise you.—The Meet is the spot where all the huntsmen assemble

to begin the fun.—My uncle duly informed me of this and added, 'See that you are up in time to get through your work before breakfast, Robert. You must be in my study not a minute later than six o'clock.' I thought he might have given me a holiday, but such liberality was not in his line, and I believe he would not have enjoyed the day's sport if he had not done his 'duty' by me. Of course, with no Walter to rouse me, I overslept myself; and the first thing I knew was Marsden, our old butler (he's dead now, poor fellow!), shaking me by the arm, and beseeching me to get up, for the Rector had been waiting half an hour for me.' The sound of his voice downstairs calling my name loudly was still more effectual, and I scrambled out of bed and into my clothes in the dim candlelight, so confused between apprehension and old Marsden's efforts to hurry me, that I took twice as long as was necessary, and seven o'clock struck before I reached the study. I well recollect standing outside in the darkness fumbling gently with the handle, and trying in vain to pluck up courage enough to enter, until my uncle called out, 'Who's there?' and I was obliged to go in. My uncle's good humour was not increased by the long delay, and I dare say he was chilled by the cold, for the servants had been too busy to light the fire properly, and it had gone out—nothing ever went well when aunt Mary was away. I got out my books, but I was shivering and half asleep still; so

the more I tried to rouse myself, the more stupid I became; and, although I had pegged away at my lessons the evening before for two mortal hours, not a word could I recollect. The first lesson for the morning happened to be English grammar, and the subject, the difference between the indicative and subjunctive moods—to most of our children a regular *pons asinorum*; and such it proved to me, for beyond it I could not get. ‘What mood do you use when doubt is implied, sir?’ thundered the Rector, and I grew so bewildered that I kept repeating after him, over and over again, like a parrot, ‘What mood do you use, sir? What mood do you use?’—Of course this provoked him.—‘Robert,’ says he, ‘there is no *doubt* that, if you are not shamming, you are the greatest fool in Christendom.’

He fought with me over the unlucky mood for nearly an hour; put the question in every possible form; twisted and turned it about so, that I was well-nigh driven distracted, and did not know whether my head or my heels were uppermost. At last he stopped in despair, saying that he would give me half an hour to think it over; and that if I did not satisfy him then, I was to be shut up for the whole day. ‘I don’t believe I am fully awake yet, uncle,’ I pleaded, ‘and I feel so faint. Do let me wait till after breakfast.’ ‘No, sir,’ says he, ‘your indolence is disgraceful. Both your father and I got up every morning at half-past five for years at

Winchester, and thought it no hardship. Set to your task.' Accordingly, I set to; but the letters seemed to swim round, and form themselves into all sorts of combinations but the right ones; and when the time of grace was up, matters were no better than before. 'Very well, Robert,' said my uncle, 'since you prefer a day alone to riding Brown Bill with me to the Meet, you are quite welcome to please yourself. Collect your books, and come with me,' and he marched me away to the Portrait Gallery. This was a long narrow corridor, shut off at both ends by doors, with a row of great windows on one side, and pictures on the other. There was no means of heating the place; and this morning especially, chilled as I had become, it seemed like descending into an empty well. My uncle then went to a large oak bookcase which stood between two of the windows, and took thence, to my disgust, a few pages of coarse, yellow paper, on which was printed, in the most puzzling of black-letter types, a ballad in commemoration of the heroic deeds and achievements of one of my worthy ancestors.—You see, Mala, we have got to the gentry at last!—There was a whole collection of these rhyming chronicles, which my uncle fully believed to have been written in the fourteenth century, and printed somewhat later. I have heard him declare, that, were they to be published, they would set all the antiquarians in England by the ears.—All I can say is, that if such rubbish

were worthy the attention of learned men, I could supply them with it by the yard, and come out a full-blown F.S.A. myself. How a man of my uncle's sense could be so easily gulled passes my comprehension; but then they certainly had been in the possession of the family for several generations, and he was in a manner born to them; consequently, their absurdities did not strike him as they would have done a stranger.—Well, to proceed! It was his custom, whenever any of us youngers transgressed bounds, or were otherwise deemed worthy of punishment, to inflict upon us one of those ballads to be committed to memory—I suppose for the same reason that induces some sage people to give naughty children a chapter of the Bible to learn, that they may become impressed by it under the most favourable circumstances!

“As you may imagine, not a few of them fell to my share. In fact, I suppose I knew more about my respected predecessors than anybody else in the house—and a nice set of thieving, drinking, pugnacious knaves they must have been, setting themselves up, notwithstanding, as very pinks of chivalry. The women, of course, were better; they were all Unas. ‘Don’t leave me here, uncle Stephen,’ I said, as he gave me the dreadful ballad, ‘I am so cold and hungry.’ ‘You are a perfect baby for your years, Robert!’ says the Rector, contemptuously; ‘learn this poem when you have mastered your

lessons thoroughly ; and do try to get a little of Sir Galahad's endurance infused into you.' With that he locked one door, and took the key ; went out, and did the same to the other. When I found myself alone, I looked about for a snug corner (if such a place were to be found in that abode of dreariness), and at last discovered a little nook between the projecting frames of two full-length portraits reaching down to the ground. There I ensconced myself among my ancestors, doubling myself up, and blowing on my benumbed hands to get a little heat. After some time, I heard the trampling of horses' feet and the sound of men's voices outside, and clambering up to a window I watched the hunters arrive, one by one. Then came a rushing about of servants and the clatter of knives and forks, and my mouth watered as I pictured to myself the jolly breakfast-table, glancing in the light of a roaring fire, and groaning under all sorts of substantial dainties ; for a hunting-breakfast is not to be despised, Mala ; and my uncle does the thing in style, I promise you ! What would not I have given for a few slices off the great round of hunter's beef ! I believe that, like Esau, I would have sold my birth-right (had I only got the chance) for that, or one or two stewed kidneys. It must be the experience of that day of starvation which gives me such a fellow-feeling for Dandie, when they neglect him here. In the bustle of entertaining his guests, the Rector for-

got that I had had no breakfast; the servants knew nothing about my being shut up; so, out of sight, out of mind! and in the midst of the feasting downstairs the poor little beggar aloft was never missed. In about an hour, I suppose (though it seemed an age to me), they all came out of the house, laughing and talking as merrily as possible; the horses were brought round, and they mounted.—It's a fine sight, Mala—a lot of dashing Englishmen in their scarlet coats and white breeches; there were several in black though, that morning, to keep my uncle in countenance, for all the parsons round about us hunt—bless you! they'd sooner miss all the week-day services in the year than one good run 'cross country. Last of all came the huntsman and his help, holding in the dogs with great difficulty by a leash, for they were barking and baying furiously—the poor fox would not be long whole when these fellows came up with him. Then I saw my dear little Brown Bill trotted out, only to be ignominiously sent back to the stable. The sight of him probably reminded my uncle of me, for he looked up at the window, and gave old Marsden some directions. I began to pluck up courage, thinking that now, surely, I should get something to eat. But no, they all rode off; not a soul was to be seen, not a sound heard, and not a creature came near me.

“Here was a nice prospect! My uncle rarely returned from hunting until it was quite dark—

later, of course, when he dined out; and in the meantime I should be obliged to remain in that icy place, which seemed to freeze my very life-blood. I knew it was no use to call for assistance, since no one in the house dared disobey my uncle's orders; and for hours not a step came along the corridor. I passed the morning in walking up and down, swinging my arms about as I had seen the coachman do to restore the circulation; until, at last, tired of that, I squatted down in my corner, and tried to call to mind all that I had read of shipwrecked sailors, and what they lived upon. I thought I would experiment upon my boots, so I pulled one off; but it tasted so vilely of blacking that I was fain to draw it on again; and in a short time I lost the sense of hunger in faintness, and fell asleep.

"I was wakened by some one trying to turn the key in the door; it had grown rusty, and was consequently rather stiff. From the length of the operation, I guessed it must be old Marsden; and presently he came in with a tray, trotting along on his old legs, his eyes bent on the ground, as if he did not wish to look at me—he told me afterwards that it was for fear the sight of my condition should tempt him to bring me a hot dinner, instead of the prescribed bread and water. He deposited a meagre portion on the window-sill, and was going out again in the same queer way, when I called after him, 'Is this all I'm to get, Marsden? I

could eat a whole loaf.' He waved his hand to me without looking round, and in a little while brought a second supply, which he silently placed beside the first, and then left me to the enjoyment of it. I drank the water greedily, but I must have fasted too long, for I could not tackle the bread after all.

"I tried to learn the abominable ballad, but it was of no use, so I curled myself up in my hole again like a dormouse. It was only about three o'clock by this time, for I had heard it strike; but it began to grow dark. The sky outside was a dull, leaden colour; flakes of snow fell rapidly, and the wind moaned about the place in a kind of fitful, stormy fashion. I shivered as I listened to the gigantic old oaks close by crashing and bending; all the ghost-stories I had ever heard crowded one after another on my memory; and as everything in the Gallery began to wear an eerie, unearthly shape, in the dim yellow light, I said my prayers, and wished that I were not shut up with my dead ancestors. At last I ventured to open my eyes and peep timidly about me. Something curious in the picture opposite attracted my attention, and my blood ran cold with horror as I perceived that it was alive!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Mala, while aunt Martha dropped her knitting.

Robert nodded: "It was the portrait of one of my great ancestors, Lewis, known as 'the Long-legged' and 'the Dandy'; and my fear speedily

changed into indignation when I discovered that he was laughing at me. I can account for this, now," he continued, "by a certain sardonic expression of the features. But, under such circumstances, a child does not stop to ask the 'why or the wherefore,' and I was fully persuaded that the wretch found a malicious pleasure in my misery. Turn which way I would, his sneering eyes followed me, his pointed little beard wagged as if he were chuckling to himself, and once I saw his foot raised to kick me, though he would have found that a preciously difficult operation with his peaked shoes.—Nor was this all! a fat old fellow by the door with an enormous tankard at his side began pointing to it, as much as to say, 'Wouldn't you like a draught?' while all the other pictures down the whole wall shook with laughter, so tickled were they by the joke; and one actually put his tongue in the corner of his mouth. 'Ain't you ashamed of yourself?' I shouted to this last, and shook my fist in his face; for he wore a bishop's mitre, and certainly ought to have been above such vulgarity. At the sound of my voice they all shrank back again into their frames, except the Dandy, who had the impudence to go on staring and winking, just as if I had not spoken, and at last I got so infuriated that I seized the glass out of which I had been drinking, and sent it smashing up against him, which effectually put a stop to his ever looking at me or any one

else again, for both the eyes and nose were cut out. Not satisfied with this, I tore the ballad (which happened to be on paper, instead of parchment as most of them were) into the tiniest little bits that teeth and hands could effect, and the heap of yellowish powder I placed on one of the window-sills.

"I had been so occupied with this energetic revenge that the first intimation of my uncle's return was the looking up and finding him standing before me. The thought of the irreparable mischief I had wrought then flashed upon me, and my small stock of courage sank so low that I felt it perceptibly oozing out through my boots. 'Robert,' said he, 'I hope you have been employing your time well. Where is the ballad?'—'I don't know,' I replied, trembling.—'You don't know, sir?' he repeated.—'The wind blew it away,' I added. My uncle looked round on hearing this, surprised, as well he might be, that I should have had strength to open the window. The heap of powder caught his eye, and he guessed the truth at once: 'You have told me a lie, Robert,' he said slowly; and I did not answer a word. He then commenced one of the long orations, which always had the worst possible effect upon me. On this occasion he did not seem able to find words strong enough to express his horror at my conduct, probably because he himself was not in the sweetest of tempers—for the whole day had been a series of mishaps, and even before the storm drove him home the fun

had been spoiled by the dogs losing scent. This, of course, was not in my favour, and he made me out such a perfect black sheep that with every word I grew more defiant, and when he concluded: 'Your sin is in every respect, in heinousness and vileness, the same as that for which Ananias and Sapphira were visited with instant death,' my rage reached its climax.

"'No!' I burst forth passionately, 'it is not the same. They lied to Peter—to a good man; but *you* are the devil!' and I really believed what I said, for at that time I used to be haunted by dreams in which I was carried off bodily by the Evil One, who always wore a white surplice, and had the same expression of countenance as that with which the Rector read the 'Curses' on Ash-Wednesday. My uncle positively fell back a few paces, so aghast was he at this speech, and it was some moments before he recovered himself.

"'Robert,' he began again, 'confess that you tore this paper, and you shall be forgiven.'

"'No,' I said, 'you have kept me here unjustly all day, and I don't believe I *have* told a lie.'

"'I give you five minutes,' said he, pulling out his watch, 'and if you do not confess then, you must be flogged.'

"*Flogged!*—flog me! Sir Robert Chesney, baronet! Every pulse in my body throbbed with indignation, and I vowed, that though I should be torn in

pieces by wild horses, not another word should they extort from me. But when I saw my uncle move towards the door, as if to summon assistance, my pride broke down, and I threw myself before him and clasped him frantically, crying : 'Don't call the servants, uncle Stephen ! I will bear anything you like, only don't call the servants !'

" 'Stand up, Robert ; it is too late now,' said my uncle, and I could see that he was glad to have discovered a way of humbling me. He opened the door and called Marsden. The old man came in, his face as long as from here to the North Pole with sorrow for me. My uncle explained briefly to him what had happened, and added, 'I want your help here. Robert must be punished ; he has told a lie.'

" 'And you have told another, Mr. Stephen,' said old Marsden, in a fierce whisper, not meant for my ear, 'for I heard you promise Sir Edward on his death-bed to be a father to the boy.'

" 'You forget yourself, Marsden,' said my uncle quietly ; but he became quite pale, and had to lean against the wall for support.

" 'It is *you* who forget yourself,' retorted Marsden, though I could see him shaking in every limb with fear ; 'it will be a different story when the mistress comes home to-morrow, and finds you have killed the child with ague, shutting him up all day in such a place.'

"The notion of my aunt's return being held up

as a threat to the Rector was so diverting to me, that I could not help chuckling to myself; though, when they both looked round to discover the cause of the strange interruption, I was as sober as a judge, and they evidently did not suspect me.

“‘You old dotard!’ said my uncle, angrily, ‘do you imagine that I am not capable of judging what is best for Robert, that you presume to speak to me in this way?’

“‘Bear with me, Mr. Stephen!’ said Marsden, in his earnestness seizing my uncle by the button-hole. ‘I am, as you say, an old dotard, with one foot in the grave; but give the boy another chance—he’s but a boy! Perhaps he will tell the truth now.’

“My uncle paused; had I been his own child, he would have had me flogged there and then, without a moment’s delay, but he would willingly have dispensed with it in my case, if he had been able to do so consistently with his word.

“‘For Marsden’s sake, Robert,’ he said, turning to me, ‘I give you another chance—Did you tear that paper?’ but although my old friend kept making the most piteous signs to me behind my uncle’s back, I would not say a word.

“‘Perhaps Sir Robert has been speaking truth all the time,’ pleaded Marsden; ‘I never saw paper torn in that way by human hands before. It looks more like the work of some animal, sir, don’t it? and there are swarms of mice here.’

"Miserable as I was, I could not help laughing at Marsden's excuse, and called out, 'Mice don't run about in the daytime, John.'

"'You see how hardened he is!' said the Rector, whilst Marsden lifted up his hands and eyes in amazement at my effrontery. 'Take off your jacket,' said my uncle. Of course, I was not going to be my own Jack Ketch; and he then motioned to Marsden, but the old fellow shrank back, saying:

"'If you think that I could lay a finger on my poor master's child, you are quite mistaken, Mr. Stephen.'

"'Then send William here,' said my uncle, calmly.

"William was a surly, indolent fellow, with a frame like an ox, lately hired. I believe if he had been told to chop off my head, he'd have done it, sooner than take the trouble to question the legality of the order. He soon had me strapped up, for I offered no resistance; but at the very first stroke my resolution deserted me, and I yelled like a mad dog. In rushed old Marsden, the tears streaming down his face. 'Mr. Robert!' he entreated, 'for God's sake don't let your father's son be heard roaring like one of Tom the ploughman's brats!' That hint was enough; tortures would not have drawn another cry from me, and in fact, how long they continued to flog me I don't know, for after the first half-dozen lashes I became unconscious, and the next thing I remember was finding myself lying in my own bed."

"But," interposed Mala, somewhat bewildered, "I don't understand this part of your story. Do you mean to say that they tie boys up in England, and flog them like slaves?"

"That's to prevent their ever becoming slaves, Mala; it's on the model of the ancient Spartan discipline, you know.—Well, as I told you, I found myself in bed; but strange to say, although wide awake, I could neither open my eyes, nor move a limb! In fact, I was in a sort of trance. That brute William in the course of the flagellation had contrived to injure some of 'the nerves in connection with the spinal cord, so as to bring on temporary paralysis' (there's a medical—what-d'ye-call it?—diagnosis, for you, Mala!), and this affected every part of my body. I was so completely powerless, that for a time they thought me dead. My mind was quite clear, however, at first, and I could distinguish plainly all that was going on. Presently, some one entered the room, and said, in a tone that sounded full of grief, 'Why did you not send for me sooner, Stephen?' Then I knew that it was 'to-morrow,' and that my aunt had returned.

"'I did not wish to alarm you unnecessarily, Mary,' replied my uncle; 'we thought at first that there was no danger.'

"They both advanced to the side of the bed, and, I suppose, stood looking at me. Then my aunt knelt down, and as she stooped over to kiss me I

could feel the hot tears fall on my face. It is strange," continued Robert, reflectively, "how trifles cling to one's memory. Everything that happened then is as present with me now as if it had occurred but yesterday. I longed to throw my arms round her neck, but when I tried, I could not move them.

"‘How did it all happen?’ she asked again, and my uncle related the whole story until he arrived at the sending for William, when she interrupted him indignantly: ‘And you trusted William to punish Robert, Stephen?—that malignant-looking fellow whom I would not suffer to break-in Ruby!—how could you, Stephen? how could you?—if it was necessary that he should be punished, why did you not do it yourself?’

"‘I could not touch poor Edward’s boy,’ said my uncle, gloomily, ‘do not upbraid me, Mary; surely I have suffered enough from self-reproach, watching these long hours by his bedside. God knows, I would rather see my own Walter lying there!’

"When I heard him say this, I felt inclined to forgive him, but then the recollection of his having called in the servants rose up in my mind, and I hardened again. Soon the doctor arrived—not the family medical man, but some one for whom they had telegraphed to London, and a consultation took place, in which the expressions ‘aberration of the brain,’ and ‘idiocy,’ were repeated several times, evidently with reference to me. A horrible dread

took possession of me. Should I indeed become like poor Tim, the fisherman's son, who lived in our village, and whom I had often seen sitting in the cottage-door, mowing and foaming at the boys that teased him on their way to school? So fearful did this idea seem, that it must have caused me to faint again, for I remember nothing more for some time.—When I came to myself, it was dark.—Of course, I could not see, but I felt positively certain that a flickering fire was almost the only light in the room, and that by it, in the arm-chair, Mrs. Marsden, John's wife, was sitting in her night-cap and spectacles, reading out of the great Bible which only appeared on Sundays, or when she remained up all night to nurse some sick person. For some time, all was still; then the door opened noiselessly (it was wonderful how acute my ears were), a light step came across the room, and I heard Marsden say, in the ghostly whisper people always *will* use in a sick-room, 'Miss Alice!—what on earth?—you'll catch your death of cold. Do you know it's near twelve o'clock?'

"'Yes, I know,' said Alice, bursting into tears, 'but I can't go to sleep. Do you think Robert will recover, Jeanie? No one will tell me what the doctor said.'

"'If it be the Lord's will, Miss Alice, he'll get better,' said Jean solemnly, 'but if he is to be taken away, we maun submit. Kneel down now, and say

Our Faither,—that's far mair sensible than shedding o' tears.'

"Alice clasped my hand in her two little ones, and repeated the Lord's Prayer aloud, as she was directed; and so long as she remained beside me I felt a strange sort of quiet happiness, and would willingly have gone straight to Heaven.—But after she had been carried back to bed, and Marsden had returned to her post, everything seemed so profoundly quiet, not a sound to be heard but the ticking of her great silver watch, the dropping of ashes from the fire, and an occasional rustle as she turned a fresh page, that I began to ponder over what I had heard, and there flashed upon me as clear as the noonday the lesson I had tried in vain to master on the morning of my disgrace: 'Where doubt and futurity are both implied, the subjunctive mood is to be used'—*if it be the Lord's will, he'll recover*; 'where they are not both implied, the indicative is to be used'—*if he is to be taken away*! So then there was little doubt either about my death or about its nearness!—What if they mistook this trance for death, and in a dâÿ or two buried me alive? A cold perspiration broke over me, as I pictured to myself the family vault in Ilmington church, into which I had seen my poor father lowered a few years before.—My mind began to wander; it seemed to me as if I were already lying on the topmost ledge, tightly nailed down in my little coffin, through the chinks of

which the dank, moist air penetrated. I heard the water drip, drip, down the sides of the vault, and the gnawing of the rats at my outer boards ; I felt the myriads of clammy, creeping things, worming their noiseless way in to feast upon my living flesh. —After a time, the lid of my coffin fell off, and I was able to sit up and look around.—From every one of the other coffins there issued a tiny blue flame, which grew, and grew, until it assumed the appearance of one of my ancestors—the features ashy pale, but otherwise identical with the portraits in the Gallery. I held my breath, and remained spell-bound with terror.—They silently joined hands, and began a series of fantastic evolutions to the light of the blue flames that proceeded from their mouths. Oh, Mala ! it was a ghastly sight to witness—soldiers, priests, court ladies, abbesses, crusaders, magistrates, going through that dance of Death!—Suddenly, they stopped and beckoned to me.—I knew now what it all meant : this was their Saturnalia to celebrate my descent into the Shades.—Sick with horror, I shook my head to indicate my refusal to join the ring ; they seemed wrathful at this, pointed their fingers at me, and one of the number who had previously stood with his back to me, but whom I had specially observed on account of his long legs, made a sudden leap up to where I was, forced me back, and sat down upon my chest. It was my old enemy, the Dandy ! I struggled to shake him off, in vain ; he grew heavier

than lead. At last, by a sudden effort, I made a desperate clutch at his throat. The whole scene vanished—vault, flames, dancers; and instead of throttling Lewis the Long-legged, I found that I had nearly done for poor Marsden, who firmly believed that I had gone raving mad, for during the last ten minutes, ever since my coffin-lid fell off, I had been sitting up in bed with eyes wide open, striking out with my fists in all directions.”

“Is that the end?” said Mala, drawing a long breath.

“That’s the end. I was ill for months afterwards, but I went to the seaside with my aunt and Alice, and by degrees got all right. One good result of the affair was, that my uncle had had enough of teaching me, and engaged a tutor for me, though he always kept on with Walter himself. Now, don’t you think I have little reason to love my ancestors?”

“Well,” said Mala, laughing, “I suppose so, but still less, I should imagine, to love your uncle.”

“Oh, I like my uncle well enough, when I’m away from him; it’s only when we get together that there are rows. Much as I detest my ancestors, though, I’m not so bad as the fellow in the play, who sells his at so much the foot. If I were reduced to my last penny, I don’t think I could barter them away. Fancy seeing my venerable granduncle, the Bishop, swinging at the door of the Mitre Tavern! or burly Sir Richard doing duty as the progenitor

of mine host of the Three Jolly Dogs! or the prim Lady Abbess frowning down on the back-parlour of a cheesemonger's shop! Faugh! How Sheridan could let his hero do a trick so mean passes my comprehension—and yet he tries to make him out a gentleman! But whenever my reign commences, that of Lewis the Dandy shall cease, unless he likes to stare at the spiders in the garret with the fresh eyes my uncle gave him. I would not have that demoniacal-looking grinner in my Gallery for a second fortune.”

“Then, I suppose, you saw no more of those stupid ballads?”

“Didn't I, though!” said Robert, pulling a wry face; “they continued to plague me for several years. I must tell you, though, what became of them,” he added, with a laugh. “My uncle once made acquaintance with an antiquary; a real antiquary, I mean—not one of your amateurs who dabble in old china and rusty coins, but one who had gone in for hard work all his life. I believe that as a baby he must have been fed out of a Roman drinking-cup, and swaddled in an Anglo-Saxon tunic, for he was far more at home with the Ancient Britons than with us monsters of civilization. He had been elected and re-elected no end of times President of the Givemno-quarter Society, which was expressly founded for the purpose of exposing cheats in the antiquarian line. I think I see him now—a tall, gaunt, lanky man,

with almost no flesh on his bones, and eyes so sunk in their sockets that one could hardly see them. I suppose that was the result of his constantly looking back so far! His clothes hung upon him so loosely that you might imagine he had made a slight mistake, and got into those of some one else; and, in fact, anybody might have substituted another suit for his, without his being a bit the wiser. I longed to try the experiment; but with all his quaintness, he was such a dear, simple soul, that I could not find it in my heart to play off any pranks upon him. I don't know how it was (unless I had caught infection from his enthusiasm), but during the week he stayed with us, I found myself getting quite zealous on the subject of Roman roads and British tumuli, and used to perambulate the whole county with him, spying out the land. One day in particular, I shall never forget, my uncle had an engagement which prevented his accompanying the Doctor; the weather looked too threatening for Walter to venture out, so I had the honour of escorting him alone. After we had been out about an hour, the rain began to come down in torrents. That was nothing to him, however; so on we trudged, and I was so interested in his talk, that I did not mind it either. Suddenly, an unusual appearance, a gentle rising of the ground, struck his attention: 'A barrow!' he cried (in as great an ecstasy as if he had discovered a new world), 'a *long* barrow too, by all that's glorious!' and down

he plumped on the soaking earth—flung away his umbrella, and began a slow peregrination on his knees round this barrow (that's a place where some more of my ancestors had stowed themselves away, Mala, after killing as many as they conveniently could of somebody else's), like a remorseful villain of the olden time doing penance at the shrine of a holy saint; while I followed, step by step, acting flunkey, and trying to keep him dry.

“Would you believe it? we were more than an hour examining this place; for in the lapse of centuries it had sunk so much, that it was some time before the Doctor could venture to imperil his reputation by declaring that it was a *bonâ fide* barrow—or *boerg*, as he declared it should be called. He actually wanted me to get down along with him while he expatiated on egg-shaped barrows, triangular barrows, and the Lord-knows-what-shaped-barrows besides. But I had too much regard for my light trousers, and thought one of us had better keep sane until the rain stopped. I was afraid to trust *my* nose too near the earth, to tell the truth, for I had a suspicion that the smell emanating from these places might give one the archæological fever.

“At last he was satisfied, and started homewards at such a double-quick pace, that I was obliged to run by his side to keep up with his long legs; and all the way he kept chuckling to himself as if he had been possessed. When we arrived at the Rectory,

he was just marching into my aunt's drawing-room, when I dropped a gentle hint that a brush might improve him. The fact is, he had got so encrusted with mud, that he might have passed easily for a brickmaker's assistant who had seen better days."

Robert stopped to indulge in a hearty laugh. "But it is getting late! I have only time to tell you that it was he who did for the ballads, and made me eternally grateful to him. He had expressed so much admiration for our museum, that my uncle was induced to produce, as a crowning effect, the chronicles hitherto kept sacred from all gazers outside the family. The old fellow received the treasures with glistening eyes, and sat up all night to examine them. Next morning, when he came down, he was unusually silent; he evidently did not like to destroy the castle of his host at one blow, but when pressed for an opinion, said bluntly: 'My dear sir, these ballads are spurious—no more the production of the fourteenth century than is the *Times* newspaper which I hold in my hand.'

"*'What!'* says my uncle, unable to articulate another word.

"*'They are written neither by the author of the Squire of low Degree, nor by Langlande,'* continued the Doctor, sorrowfully, for he fully appreciated my uncle's disappointment.

"*'How do you make that out?'* says my uncle.

" 'In the first place,' said the Doctor, putting on his glasses and rummaging among the papers, 'look at the spelling—compare it with this edition of *Piers Ploughman*,' and out of his pocket popped that gentleman, whoever he may be; 'or with the *Mort Artur*,' and the skeleton made his appearance, 'or even with the *Romaunt*,' and Chaucer stepped upon the scene. I believe the old fellow had the whole Givemnoquarter Library in his pockets, for it was perfectly marvellous to see what they contained.

" Well, they went at it, my uncle and he, fighting over those precious ballads, until the Rector was obliged to confess himself floored on the first point. I felt so intensely excited, that I quite forgot where I was, gave an emphatic thump on the table, and called out: 'Hurrah, Doctor! go it! go it! I'll back you as the winner!'

" The Doctor was too much engrossed with his subject to hear me, and went on:

" 'Now for the second proof!'

" But what the second proof was I never learned, for my uncle (who was by no means pleased to discover that I had witnessed his discomfiture) soothed his chagrin by kicking me—figuratively—out of the room, and giving me—literally—a thousand lines as an imposition. But I did that willingly, and if the Doctor could only have annihilated my ancestors, and proved as con-

clusively that I was the son of Nun, I'd have copied the whole 'Æneid' for him with the greatest pleasure. From that day the Chronicles mysteriously vanished," concluded Robert, as he rose to go, "but the dear old Doctor was never asked to the Rectory again. Never mind! he shall be one of the first guests at the Place, when I come into my kingdom."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FAMOUS RETREAT OF THE FOUR HUNDRED.

As all the world knows, the University of Städtlein boasts a constant succession of sons who laudably disfigure themselves for her sole honour and glorification—at least one-third of the number in residence being able to point to scarred cheeks and indented heads, to slashed arms and seamed shoulders, as incontrovertible evidences of martial valour and burning zeal on her behalf. This third, known as *the corps par excellence*, is the dominant element in the student-world, and bullies the remainder into subjection, being itself kept in awe by a few choice spirits. The corps are six in number, distinguished by the colour of their caps and the appellations of Vandals, Huns, Franks, Alemanni, Ostrogoths, and Visigoths; and the main object of their presence at the University is, of course, the consumption of beer and the fighting of duels.

Now it happened, at the time of which we are writing, that there arose in Städtlein a new rectorial dynasty which knew not the ancient customs of the place, neither regarded its time-honoured traditions,

and the Pharaoh who in particular oppressed the Brethren was no less a personage than the Vice-Principal, an energetic and learned doctor of theology, rejoicing in the name of Esen, and in being the moving power in the Upper Senate. In his eyes, the habit of duelling was little short of vicious, and the evenings spent by the Four Hundred in their debating societies downright waste of time. It was, accordingly, settled in his own mind, on his accession to office, that the whole affair must be put down, with the high hand if lenient measures proved insufficient. He forthwith commenced a vigorous assault upon the duellists in the *Städtlein Gazette*, and, as a further initiatory step, formed an opposition corps of non-duellists, who professed to object to the practice from principle, and wore Black velvet caps in token of their abhorrence of the doings of their comrades, the Reds, the Blues, the Greens, the Whites, the Purples, and the Yellows.

As may be imagined, these proceedings only excited ridicule. The name of the enemy, *Esen*, (easily convertible into *Esel-Anglice-ass*), furnished an irresistible opportunity to undergraduate wit, and the walls of the theological lecture-rooms were decorated with huge chalk caricatures, wherein a patient herd of sphinx-like creatures, with the body of an ass and the face of a pharisaical devotee, were driven along by an individual with lash in hand,

and features bearing a striking resemblance to those of the venerable Doctor.

No notice being taken of this manifesto, the six corps waxed even bolder, and commenced a persecution of the unfortunate Blackcaps so open and violent, that the Upper Senate held a special diet to deliberate on the best means of putting a stop to it. The consequence of this was the arrest and confinement on the solitary system of the very next parties caught in the act of duelling, henceforth declared illegal, and contrary to the rules and regulations of the University.

When this proceeding became known the utmost excitement prevailed. Never within collegiate memory had such a tampering with the liberty of the subject been heard of. The whole undergraduate world rose up in arms, and amongst the rest our friend Robert, of course, caught the revolutionary infection.

Before this crisis, he had studiously held himself aloof from the fraternity (partly because Walter had done so, partly also because, as we have seen, they were not over-tender in their allusions to his non-smoking), and had not unfrequently made merry at the expense of the hirsute chins of the Brethren, and their partiality for jackboots and beer. But now that they appeared for the first time in the new character of a persecuted sect—now that the authorities had dared to break the unwritten law of

Privilege, that victims to their injustice were actually undergoing a severe penalty, Robert glowed with sympathy for the martyrs; and, heedless of the consequences, offered himself to the Vandals as a candidate for membership. In vain Arnold besought him not to imperil his early majority by engaging in the dangerous delights of rebellion. Robert was firm; as an Englishman, he could not "desert the weak cause."

"No one can accuse you of desertion," expostulated Arnold; "you have never had anything to do with the corps, never been mixed up with them in any way. And as for their weakness, I have often heard you say, that the sooner they were disbanded the better."

"All that is past and gone," replied Robert, loftily; "whatever the faults of the corps may have been, there is no doubt that they are in the right about this affair, and no Englishman will stand by with his hands in his pockets and see oppression going on. You may save yourself the trouble of talking, old boy," as Arnold seemed about to bring forth another argument, "for von Kirchenstein has already proposed me to the Reds (he's their chief), and I'm to be presented to the confederation to-night, and sworn in. Will you come? I've no doubt we could smuggle you in. There is to be a grand *Commerz* (that's a muster of the lot of us, you know), to discuss the best plan of action, and the President's speech

will be worth listening to. He's von Kirchenstein's cousin, the Baron von Eckhardt, and a clever fellow too."

Arnold accepted the invitation, not from motives of curiosity regarding either the Brethren or their President, for as an old Z—er, he had abundance of experience of the working of similar societies; but with the desire to hold back Robert, if possible, from rushing into folly. The time fixed for the rendezvous was nine o'clock, and precisely at a quarter before the hour the two young men issued from Dr. Frank's, after a vigorous contention between the old lady and Robert regarding the wearing of his greatcoat. It was a wet January evening, cold and raw, but the zeal of the embryo Vandal had reached fever-point, and no individual of that much aspersed race could have exhibited a greater contempt for umbrella or thick boots. On the way they were joined by Graf Max, whose face wore an expression of anxious gravity befitting the solemnity of the occasion, and not a word was interchanged until they halted in a narrow street before a closed door. An evidently pre-arranged very gentle rataplan on the panel was followed by a cautious opening, and a head peered forth to reconnoitre. It recognised von Kirchenstein, and said, in a whisper, "Thou art late, Max. Is this the candidate?"

"It is," responded the Count, with laconic brevity.

"And who accompanies you?"

"A friend to the cause."

"Pass, friend," returned the sentry, opening the door with a velocity so unexpected that the gloomy chief of the Reds was only saved a broken nose by the new recruit's taking vigorous hold of his coat tails. They found themselves in a dark passage, where a confused murmur as of a surging crowd broke upon their ear.

Robert turned pale with excitement as he whispered to Arnold, "There are some desperate fellows among them! I should not care to be in Esen's shoes to-night."

After going through another long corridor, up a flight of steps, and passing a second examination, von Kirchenstein suddenly drew aside a curtain, and they perceived that they were standing at the bottom of a large hall, bare and whitewashed, evidently used on ordinary occasions for gymnastic purposes, but on this evening filled by six long tables, surrounded on all sides by young men, who were talking with the animated air and decided gestures peculiar to Fritz when once fairly roused. Von Kirchenstein took his station as chief of the Vandals, and motioned his companions to places reserved for them. They had hardly seated themselves when the clock struck the hour, the babel of tongues gave way to a stillness so marked that one might have heard a pin drop; and this again was succeeded by a *furor* of clattering of glasses and thumping of feet, as the President

entered, and advanced towards a smaller table placed crosswise on a dais at the top of the room, where he occupied a raised throne, beneath which on either side sat a secretary armed with writing materials. Silence still prevailed. The six Vice-Presidents left their seats, withdrew into an inner room, and presently emerged bearing in procession:—V.P. of the Ostrogoths, a lighted candle; V.P. of the Visigoths, a second ditto; V.P. of the Franks, a gilt sword; V.P. of the Alemanni, a gigantic mace; V.P. of the Huns, a silver goblet; V.P. of the Vandals, a human skull. At sight of the last-named object Arnold glanced at Robert with a smile suggestive of Tappertit reminiscences, but the candidate was too solemnly impressed by the grandeur of the proceedings to have thoughts for associations so irrelevant. When the potent symbols had been arranged in due order before the President, the Vices bowed and retired to their places.

“Gentlemen,” said the President, a very intelligent-looking young man, who had apparently lost his razors, “we will open the *Commerz* in the usual way;” whereupon the Brethren broke forth into the Ode of Unity, or Canticle of Fraternization, which was frantic in its demands for a German Fatherland, and urged the vocalists, at the end of every verse, to pledge one another in a loving cup, an appeal by no means disregarded by the community, especially as it was rendered comprehensible by the presence of

enormous tankards of foaming *baierisch* at intervals down the tables. This ceremony over, the President requested that the candidate for admission might be presented to him, and Robert was formally marched up to the dais between von Kirchenstein and another sponsor.

"Gentlemen," said the President again, "you will please to signify, in the usual manner, your acceptance of this candidate," a remark which elicited a show of hands overwhelmingly in favour of his admission, although some one was heard to call out from a far corner of the room, "Apply the tobacco test!" a hint that met with the contempt it deserved. Due particulars of Robert's age, appearance, etc., having been entered in the secret books of the fraternity, a sealed paper was given to him, with instructions to burn it after perusal, and then the President proceeded to administer the oath. What this was, reader, we may not divulge under pain of the cord and the dagger, but we can assure you that it sounded sufficiently terrible, and was of complexion Fenian enough to suit the most radical Red Republican. This was succeeded by a rite emphatic in its simplicity; the six Vices stationed themselves opposite to Robert, and in view of the assembled Brotherhood, at a sign from the Baron, each took off his cap; the white, the red, the blue, the green, the purple, and the yellow; and with a sharp instrument hitherto concealed within his sleeve, and supposed

to be a stiletto, though strongly resembling an oyster-knife, solemnly pierced a hole in that emblem of Liberty, and presented it for the inspection of Robert, as those who would say: "So, O friend, will we do unto thy seat of wisdom, shouldest thou prove false to the cause." The candidate examined it with equal gravity, and in return obliged the fraternity by going through the same manœuvre with the badge of Vandalism handed to him by the Baron, as one who would say: "May my cranium be riddled through in like manner before I desert you, O my Brethren." He then placed it upon his head a little to the one side, in as swaggering, dashing a style as if he had been a member of the corps all his life; and the ceremony concluded by his quaffing out of the silver goblet, after the President and the six Vices had done the same, a fluid supposed to be the stream of life, but tasting very like claret. The Baron then stood up before the assembly, and shaking hands heartily with him, said in a stately way:

"Sir, allow me to say publicly, that I honour your courage in coming forward to join our ranks at a time like this, when fate frowns gloomily upon us, and adversity threatens to overwhelm us. Sir, allow me further to say, that in your presence among us we recognise, not merely the expression of individual sympathy, but the expression of the fellow-feeling of a great nation for those who, like herself, are lovers of freedom, and are striving to follow in her footsteps

in that respect. Sir," concluded the President majestically, "allow me once more, in the name of my brethren, to say that we welcome you as a colleague, as a confederate, as a confrère—in short, sir, as a man and a brother;" and amidst thunders of applause he resumed his seat.

"Mr. President," began Robert, much affected by his warm reception, and secretly wishing that Wallraf had been present—"Mr. President, and gentlemen of the Student Corps, I—I am quite unable to reply worthily to your very kind welcome; but allow me to say, that in recognising the efforts of my country in the cause of freedom, you have conferred upon me personally the greatest honour you could have paid me, for it is my highest glory that I am an Englishman. Of course, you, as Germans, cannot help your nationality," (here he became conscious that he might possibly be saying something unpalatable, but quickly recovering himself, continued), "but, next to my own country, there is none that I admire so much as yours, and I am proud to be also in a sense a son of Fatherland;" and amid a prolonged round of thumps and clattering, Robert retired gracefully to his place.

The President having conferred in a low voice with the six Vices, struck his mace thrice upon the table. Deep silence ensued; seriousness was imprinted upon every face; energy betokened in the alert attitude of each individual; the action of some

overwhelming interest set forth in the non-replenished glasses and extinguished pipes.

Von Eckhardt then, in a speech bristling with italics and capital letters, proceeded to the real business of the evening. "We are met here to-night, Gentlemen," he began, "on affairs that merit our *Anxious Consideration*." (Effective pause of two seconds and a half.) "At no period in the past history of our Existence were our Liberties so *menaced*, our Privileges so *assailed*, our Rights so *wantonly disregarded* (hear, hear!), and a Crisis, pregnant with results so *Momentous*, deserves, as I have said, your earnest, thoughtful attention. Bear in mind, Gentlemen, that on this occasion we stand here—drops in a *seething, wrathful* ocean—not merely to vindicate our own Claims to Justice, not merely to assert the *Position* of the *Free Corps*, but, and this seems to *me* the Highest Argument of the *Patriot*, as the Representatives of *Thousands* yet unborn, who will enjoy the Blessings of *Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity*, in exact proportion to the Fidelity with which you discharge the important *Trust* now committed to you. I appeal to you, then, Gentlemen, in the *Name* of *Posterity*!" (the claims of Posterity unanimously recognised through the medium of pewter). "Gentlemen! I need hardly allude more particularly to the *Painful Circumstances* which have brought us together, and given to our social *Kneip-Abend* the more solemn character of a *Commerz*. Three of

our number, endeared to us by *every Tie* of Brotherhood, are at present suffering an *Odious Persecution*, for no other crime than that which constitutes, in our eyes, their *highest glory*! for having proved their *Right* to the Name of *Man* by showing their ability to defend that Right! These Three, Martyrs in our Common Cause, are here in Spirit to-night, if prevented by *Galling Fetters* and *Iron Bolts* from joining their Corporeal Units to our Corporate Entity, and in their names, Comrades—in the names of the *modern HGRATHI*—a second time I appeal to you!” (Veherent sympathy with the Heroes expressed by the boots of the Brethren.) “Gentlemen, at the risk of *Prolixity*, I venture once more to work upon those *Generous Impulses* which have *never* been slow in responding to the *Calls* of the *Oppressed*, and I remind you, that the Brotherhood throughout the Fatherland watch with *Clasped Hands* and *Outstretched Arms* the Issue of this Contest—that, in fact, Europa has her *Eyes* upon you—and for the third time, Gentlemen, I appeal to you on *Behalf of Humanity*!!” (If the generous impulses of the Free Corps were to be measured by the amount of stamping and clapping that ensued, they must have been very gushing indeed, and extremely helpful, not only to Humanity in general, but specially to the Brotherhood in the peculiar attitude indicated.) “You are aware, Gentlemen,” continued the President, when the storm had somewhat subsided, “that our adversaries have, for

some time past, been busily engaged in *Calumniating* us in the *public prints*, Blackening our *Characters* as *Individuals* and as a *Body*. From the Representations there given of our Pursuits, the *World* might suppose the sole Ends and Aims of the Student Corps, in fact their sole *raisons d'être*, to be those of *Eating* and *Drinking*. Some have even suggested the *Sausage* and the *Wineflask* as our appropriate *insignia*." (Bursts of subdued wrath.) "Towards such *Aspersions* the Student Corps have hitherto maintained (as best became them) an Attitude of *Dignified, Wordless Contempt*. But now that, emboldened by our apparent *Pusillanimity*, the Enemy advances from its Ambush, and openly plants the *Cloven Hoof* upon the *Vital Element* in our Constitution; then, my Brethren, I put it to you calmly and dispassionately, under such circumstances, are we *still* to remain *Silent*? to submit tamely to an *Ignoble Yoke*? to put our *necks* beneath the *feet* of those who, in the language of the immortal countryman of the noble Brother just admitted, 'dressed in a little *BRIEF Authority*, play fantastic tricks that make the *Angels Weep*?' " (Cries of "No, no! Down with the tyrants! Ostracize the asses!") "Duelling, my comrades, is the *Stronghold* of our System, the very *Essence* of our united *Life*; and it is *this*—this last remaining Relic of sterner, more *Manly* times—this glorious Privilege handed down to *Us* through the slow course of the *Ages* by faithful Bands of Confederated *Swordsmen*, that those

whom I will not pollute my *Lips* by naming, dare to stigmatize as an *obsolete, Mediæval Custom*." (Intense groans for the audacious and unnameable Blackcaps). "Where will you find an Exercise calculated to give a firmer *Tread*, a more unfaltering Resolution, a surer Eye?" (Cries of "Nowhere, nowhere! *Vive le duel! Das duell hoch!*") "He who refuses to accept an honourable challenge," concluded the President, brandishing his oyster-knife right and left, to the imminent peril of the two secretaries, "has not a *Spark* of manly Feeling. He may pretend to be actuated by *High motive*—to have taken up his Position on some *Transcendental Eminence*, whence the doings of his *fellow-Mortals* appear to him in the same light that the marching and counter-marching of an Army of *Ants* appear to us. But" (and here the President grew so profoundly emphatic that he sank his voice to a whisper, and leant over the candlesticks with a magnificent disregard to singed whiskers), "*he is a Coward! Yes, Gentlemen!*" (in a voice of thunder) "*a dastardly villain! a sneaking Poltroon! who winks, and blinks, and shrinks, at the sight of the naked, flashing steel; and who deserves that his Ribs should be brought into Intimate acquaintance with the Cudgel!*"

Having delivered himself of this weighty opinion, the President sat down, amid tumultuous applause, which continued, without intermission, until a second orator, no other than our friend Robert, after

attempting, in vain, to make himself heard, jumped upon the table and demanded, at the pitch of his voice, "Three cheers for the Baron!" which accordingly poured forth, with the deafening precision of volleys of artillery, from the four hundred throats.

Letters were then read from old Goths and Vandals, as well as from the Alumni of other universities, expressive of much sympathy; and to these succeeded addresses of a very inflammatory character, in which the venerable Doctor was compared to Alva, to Nero, to every bloodthirsty monster under the sun, until the long-suffering Student-corps, wrought up to the last pitch of excitement by these vivid descriptions of their woes, became ferocious in their cries for "Vengeance! vengeance!" demanding to be led on, no matter where—into the very jaws of death would march the Four Hundred. At length, a quiet-looking Brother, who seemed quite out of place among such sons of thunder, suggested that time was going on, that it was nearly eleven o'clock, and that no plan of action had as yet been decided upon, a hint which elicited the programme already concocted between the President and his six subordinates, viz., a triumphal entry into the town on the morrow, to be followed by a serenade and grand manifestation of popular sentiment beneath the pro-Rector's windows. A discussion ensuing as to the proper harmonies or discords to be used on the occasion, the meek individual informed the assembly, to

Arnold's consternation, that on the left of the chief of the Vandals there sat a professor of the Conservatorium. Here was a nice predicament! Arnold grew faint with horror as he thought of the probable consequences of his presence among the rebellious crew. He had no time for reflection, however, for before he had recovered from his surprise, he found himself standing between two Brethren before the President's table, where he was courteously invited to offer suggestions. "Unhand me!" cried Arnold, making a desperate effort to free himself from the tight grasp of the meek duellist, whom he now recognised as brother to the librarian at the Conservatorium. "Let me go, will you? I am no Corps Student! I cannot, I *will* not, help you!"

In an instant the whole assembly was on its feet, while mingled shouts of "A spy!" "A traitor!" "Turn him out!" "Knock him on the head!" filled the air. Three strokes of the President's mace, twice repeated, restored order, although some fifty of the boldest Brethren refused to sit down, and glared at Arnold with eyes expressive of feelings anything but pacific.

"If you are not a friend to the Corps, sir," said von Eckhardt, with some surprise, "may I ask why we see you here this evening?"

In reply, Arnold (who by this time had recovered his presence of mind) suddenly made one or two mesmeric passes, so close to the President's most

prominent feature, that the uninitiated by-standers seized him again precipitately, under the impression that he meant some harm to their leader. The effect upon the Baron was different.

"Hands off, you fools!" he said, majestically; and the snubbed satellites fell back amazed. On Arnold's further whispering some cabalistic words in the ear of the President, the latter extended his hand to him, saying, in a low tone, "You nearly got into a devil of a mess," and then audibly, "Welcome, sir, to our midst! I regret that, for a moment, you should have been regarded with suspicion. All right, gentlemen! this is a trusty, valued Brother. He has explained to me his reasons for being unable at present to assist us."

The fifty valiant duellists were now as ready to conduct him to his place in honour, as a few minutes before they had been to present for his acceptance half-a-hundred successive challenges; and the discovery, which, but for his connection with the Mystic-Sons-of-Light, might have cost him dear, passed off quietly.

"Robert," said he, as soon as his escort had retired, "let us get away. There is mischief brewing, and you will be blamed as well as these idiots."

"Go away, indeed!" retorted Robert, angrily. "No such thing!" Hardly had the words escaped his lips when their attention was attracted by a confused noise at the lower end of the hall. The curtain

was rudely thrust aside, and a little stout man, with a very red face surmounted by a white hat, appeared, struggling with the two sentries, who were striving by gentle force to oppose his entrance.

Arnold had additional reason to wish himself and Robert well out of the scrape, for the little stout man was no less a personage than the Mayor of Städtlein, who had received secret intimation that proceedings dangerous to the whole community were in process of discussion at the Gymnasium. It is difficult to determine whether the Brethren fully appreciated the significance of his presence; they allowed him to pass unmolested up to the raised dais, but no sooner did he attempt to speak, than cries of "Hat off! hat off!" effectually prevented a syllable reaching its destination. Caps of various hues were conspicuous in all parts of the hall, but it was apparently not permitted to non-duellists to indulge in the autocratic luxury of a covered head, for on the Mayor's persistent refusal to divest himself of the obnoxious article, one of the Brethren obligingly relieved him of it, and kicked it into a corner close by Arnold, who, in his turn, picked it up, and, at the risk of a broken head, returned it to its legitimate owner. Order being with difficulty restored, von Eckhardt proceeded, with well-affected ignorance, to inquire their visitor's name, and the reason of his presence among them.

"You know very well who I am, Herr Baron,"

returned the worthy magistrate irascibly; "and allow me to tell you, that I am more than amazed to find *you* here at the head of this pack of fools. Nice intelligence for my lord your father, when I write him to-morrow! Gentlemen," he continued, raising his voice, and boldly confronting the 800 angry eyes, "you are a disgrace to the University! I repeat it—a disgrace to the University! Mark me well! I declare this meeting illegal, and if the hall be not cleared within the space of five minutes, I summon the police to my assistance."

A dead silence succeeded this threat, and von Eckhardt inquired, with a smile of calm contempt, "Are you aware, sir, that we are assembled in our own hall, for purposes connected with our own progress—that not one word of political meaning has been spoken here to-night? On what ground, then, do you justify this interference?"

"Herr Baron," returned the old man with equal calmness, "I am not here to bandy words. I am not answerable for my conduct to *you*;" and drawing out his watch, he added, "In the name of the king, I, Burgomaster of Städtlein, dissolve this assembly, and declare that any one found here after the lapse of five minutes, shall be arrested and punished as a violator of the law!"

"I recognise neither this law nor your right to inflict the penalty, Herr Mayor," returned the Baron lotly, and the sentiment was echoed in different

forms by every one in the room except Arnold, who, well versed in encounters of the kind, stationed himself quietly near the Mayor, resolved, as the only neutral person, to provide for his safety. The Mayor waited imperturbably the expiration of the given time, then applying a whistle to his lips, a posse of gendarmes filed into the hall, and at the same moment the lights were suddenly extinguished, and the place left in utter darkness. It is impossible to describe the scene that followed—everybody fighting pell-mell with everybody—now with friend, now with foe, but the students had evidently the best of it, their familiarity with the locality enabling them to take advantage of the help afforded by the struggling moonbeams, and, when the worst came to the worst, to make their escape in divers unthought-of ways. At the beginning of the fray, Arnold dragged the Mayor out into the street by main force, and deposited him in a place of safety, the old gentleman pommelling him vigorously all the while in self-defence. He then stationed himself near the building, to watch for Robert and assist his flight. After waiting for some time, and eagerly scrutinizing the countenances of the Brethren, who dropped in quick succession from a window and disappeared down a side lane, he perceived some half-dozen tightly-pinioned captives emerge by the legitimate mode of exit, and as they filed past him, between a detachment of sergeants, he recognised, in front of the procession,

marching with head erect and firm tread, the newly-made duellist. Arnold contrived to get close, and said in a low tone as they walked along, "Robert!"

The prisoner glanced quickly round, and returned, with his usual nonchalance, "Good-bye, old fellow! I'm in for it now!"

"What shall we do?" pursued Arnold in real perplexity, for he knew very well that those captured would serve as scape-goats for the rest. "Your uncle!"

Here an emphatic "Deuce take my uncle!" cut the colloquy short, for on the approach of a military-looking gentleman, who invitingly offered him a pair of handcuffs, Arnold was compelled to call into action his almost forgotten knowledge of back-handed blows, and take to his heels immediately down the lane. When he had fairly out-distanced his pursuers, he stopped to reconnoitre, and perceived that he was close to Wallraf's house. A light issuing from the sitting-room showed that it was still occupied, and he rushed upstairs. Wallraf, as one of the art-lecturers, and a member of the University Senate, might have some influence in rescuing Robert from his disagreeable position.

"Good God! Arnold! what has happened?" exclaimed Wallraf, startled, as well he might be, by the unexpected appearance of his *protégé* at twelve o'clock at night, his face streaming with blood, his dress disordered, his whole aspect agitated.

"Robert!—the Mayor!—arrested!" was all Arnold found breath to say, as he sank into a chair.

Wallraf comprehended at a glance the whole situation: "The young fool," he ejaculated, as he assisted Arnold to stanch the blood. "After keeping away from those fellows for two years, to join them at the very time when they are in worst odour! I suppose he was at this *Commerz*, then?"

"Yes," said Arnold, briefly, "Wallraf! what is to be done? Cannot you help me?"

"Oh, Damon! thou art an ass!" grumbled Wallraf; "let him reap the fruit of his deeds—a night in the guardroom will cool his ardour."

"It will not end with one night," urged Arnold; "the Mayor is fearfully incensed, and vows he will make an example of all those caught. The ring-leaders are off, and only a few raw members like Robert in custody. Think what his uncle will say!"

"It is all the doing of that blockhead Esen," said Wallraf, as he goodnaturedly pulled on his overcoat. "Why could not he be content to leave things as he found them?" (from which we may infer that the pianist did not approve of his own principles being carried into practice). "Come along, then, since you insist upon it; but I fear the Mayor will have no ear for us to-night."

Wallraf's surmise proved correct—the worthy magistrate, who had not recovered his maltreatment, positively refused at first to hear a word in

favour of the culprit. Ultimately, however, the representations of Wallraf, whom he knew very well, coupled with his recognition of Arnold as the restorer of the hat, and his subsequent deliverer, prevailed, and he signed an order for Robert's release, armed with which the friends proceeded to the cell where the baronet had been provided with accommodation for the night. To Arnold's dismay, Robert positively refused to avail himself of the permission to depart.

"No!" he reiterated, "when did an Englishman turn his back on friends in distress? After such a sneaking trick, do you imagine I could ever look myself in the face again? Von Kirchenstein is here too—caught while trying to get me off—and we stand or fall together!" With which magnanimous determination Robert seated himself on his truckle-bed, and turned his back upon his friends.

"Well said, my little hero!" applauded Wallraf, patting him on the shoulder, "you have risen a step in my esteem by your decision. Come, Arnold, we had better retire, and leave these Spartans to the enjoyment of their bread and water!" and Arnold found himself reluctantly compelled to leave his hot-headed friend to his fate. Next day Goths, Vandals, and the rest of the fraternity, were tried by court martial, and sentenced to various periods of imprisonment in the top story of a square tower, well known to the Corps Students; Robert, in consideration of

his being defended by so able an advocate as Wallraf, receiving only three days.

Before twelve hours of the penalty had been endured, however, a new aspect was given to affairs. In consequence of the difficulty experienced in discovering the real offenders, a pardon was granted by royal warrant to all—and the same penalty inflicted on all, viz.: the closing of the fencing-halls, and the consignment of weapons of every description to the safe custody of the Arsenal for the space of one calendar month. At the expiry of this term, matters went on in the usual way; and the pro-Rector, having in the interim found a more congenial atmosphere for his energies, the students were left at liberty to slice and hack each other to their heart's content—a privilege which they are no doubt enjoying to the present day. But no sooner was this desirable consummation arrived at, than Robert's interest in the corps ceased, and his Red Cap vanished as mysteriously as the chronicles of his uncle had done.

CHAPTER XVII.

MALA ASTONISHES HER FATHER.

FEBRUARY had come—colder, bleaker, more inclement than usual, and brought in its train more than its ordinary amount of sickness and want; for the harvest of the preceding year had failed, and hundreds of starving families left their homes in distant, isolated villages, to throng into Städtlein in quest of food and work. The distress prevailing in the city was unexampled within the memory of its inhabitants. Never had its streets presented so pitiable an aspect; band after band of gaunt wanderers pressing in to crowd the fever-wards in hospital and prison, until the municipal authorities, no longer able to cope with the unexpected burdens thrown upon them, were compelled to appeal to private charity to supplement the inadequate means at their disposal. Herr Bergmann, in particular, was urged to lend his aid, the value of which had often been experienced before.

Now there existed, as is well known, a sort of tacit understanding between the sister-towns of Städtlein and Dörfchen—the one a stronghold of

Music, the other of Painting—that in times of necessity their several resources were to be considered mutually available. Did the Städtleiners, for instance, lack funds for the completion of a church, the painters of Dörfchen were ready to organize gratuitously a series of *Lebende Bilder*: on the other hand, did the local charities of Dörfchen stand in need of help, the musicians of Städtlein willingly gave a concert on behalf of the object. On this occasion, however, which so far surpassed in magnitude all ordinary demands on public benevolence, it was arranged that both forces should combine, the representatives of both arts agreeing to work together cordially for the benefit of the sufferers from the famine—Herr Bergmann, as Town Kapellmeister, superintending the musical part of the proceedings, and Herr von Holz, as Director of the School of Painting, the *Lebende Bilder*, the prices of admission being on a scale that would ensure permanent results. For the information of the English reader, we ought, perhaps, to premise that *Lebende Bilder*, *tableaux-vivans*, are nothing more nor less than the exact realistic reproduction of some famous picture—historical scenes, of course being preferred, as affording the best opportunity for grouping and general dramatic effect. So many masterpieces had already been interpreted in this way, that the available material in the strictly German school seemed to be

exhausted; the painters were obliged to look abroad for novelties, and accordingly chose for the evening under consideration two subjects by English artists, which they supposed would be entirely new to the majority of the spectators. As finally arranged, the programme was the following:—

Tableau—Harlowe's 'Trial of Queen Catherine.'

Cantata—'Goetz with the Iron Hand' (first time of performance), conducted by the composer, Herr Arnold Müller.

Tableau—West's 'Hannibal.'

Concert—'Miscellaneous.'

And this mode of bleeding the purse we strongly recommend to the notice of all charitable committees, as decidedly more novel and attractive than the time-worn bazaar or fancy fair, advising them at the same time to adhere closely to the German model in steering clear of well-meaning amateurs, and enlisting the sympathies of those who are competent to give the much-tried British public a fair equivalent for its filthy but all-essential lucre.

The cantata was Arnold's first public essay. Several of its "numbers" had been tried over in the private concerts of the Städtlein Society of Musicians, and met with such general approval that it was unanimously selected as the staple musical attraction. It was, therefore, with no little anxiety, that he looked forward to the evening which might seal his claims to be considered a composer of the

highest class, or demolish them entirely ; and as the time drew near, apprehension so far outweighed certainty that he would have withdrawn his work altogether as too ambitious for a first attempt, had Herr Bergmann and Wallraf yielded to his representations. The former, however, had no doubt about the result of the experiment ; and as for Wallraf, he was only one degree less interested in its successful production than Arnold, since it was he who had provided the "stuff" for the composer's labours by linking together the appropriate events in Goethe's drama, and had thus manufactured what he flattered himself into thinking a very neat piece of work. (This opinion we may endorse by the way, for although only a shadow of the original—and as such, perhaps, sinning against the memory of its great author—it was nevertheless ingeniously put together, and possessed of real, living interest, which is more than can be said for most *libretti*.) The suggestion for the work emanated from Arnold himself, who had a strong liking for the determined old hero, dating as far back as the days when he used to place the garret at the Hunting Lodge in a state of siege, and try in vain to induce Mariechen to act any other part than that of the beautiful Adelheid.

The eventful evening arrived, all the tickets had been sold, and by eight o'clock the lesser town-hall was filled to suffocation by spectators, eager to witness the first *tableau*. About this we need say

little, as from its connection with the Kemble portraits most of our readers are doubtless familiar with its main features: the injured Queen in the act of uttering her spirited protest against Wolsey's "Be patient yet!" behind her Cardinal Campeius; at the table the members of the Papal Commission—under the canopy, Henry VIII. Suffice it, that no effort had been spared to secure a gorgeous *mise en scène*, the opera-house having placed its most valuable "properties" at the disposal of the artists, a liberality imitated by several private individuals.

But while the enthusiastic plaudits in the lesser hall testified to the gratification of the assembled crowd, a very different scene might have been witnessed in the great hall, where the musicians were already tuning their instruments,—Arnold pale with consternation, Wallraf in a fury, the good Director at his wits' end; for at the last moment a note had been received from the Soprano, announcing her inability to fulfil her engagement.

"These women!" thundered the irate misogynist. "Never to be relied upon! I would shut them all up in lunatic asylums, if I had my way!"

What was to be done?—no substitute could possibly be procured, for the music was still in manuscript, and had been entrusted to no hands but those of the lady in question. Unfortunately, also, her *rôle* was the principal one, and the failure of the Cantata appeared inevitable.

The St. Cecilians came trooping in before the general public to take their places, for they had agreed to honour their secretary by descending for once from their high classical eminence to sing his choruses. Among the rest was Mala, whose quick eye perceived at a glance that something had occurred. On learning the truth, she stood for an instant paralysed; she had been Arnold's confidante while the cantata was in progress, and had sung every number through with him before any one else had seen it; she was best able, therefore, to appreciate his disappointment. The audience poured in from the great hall—still she remained rooted to the spot, her eyes fixed on the ground as though revolving some anxious question with herself.

When she saw the Director assume the *bâton*, however (Arnold's agitation rendering him incapable of conducting) all indecision fled. "Arnold," she said, in a low voice, "I will take the Soprano part."

Arnold started; his moody look gave way to a bright flash. "Dear Mala!" he ejaculated, adding suddenly, "What will your father say?"

"Tell him!" replied Mala, faintly.

Had the Director received private intelligence that the proverbial cricket on the hearth was about to favour the audience with a solo, he could not have been more incredulous. His timid little Mala, whose voice had never been heard without the accompaniment of others beyond the four walls of his

own drawing-room, and rarely there if strangers were present, voluntarily to assay a difficult dramatic impersonation before that sea of faces! Impossible! He could hardly believe his own ears when she herself confirmed the truth of Arnold's statement.

"But, only reflect, my dear child," he gasped. "Have you sufficient nerve?"

"I think so, papa."

"You *think* so? You must be *sure*, Mala, before we run the risk; a failure would be very detrimental to Arnold."

"I will not fail," said Mala, quietly; while Arnold added, eagerly, "If Mala will but try, I would rather trust the part to her than to any one else in the world."

The Director looked doubtfully from the composer to his daughter, and from his daughter back again to the composer, and shook his head; but finding the young people firm, he reluctantly gave his consent, and Arnold joyfully escorted Mala to the seat beside the Contralto—a stout lady of good-humoured aspect and uncertain age, who smiled on her young colleague, and to herself as she overheard a certain whispered "Dear, *dear* Mala, now I know that my cantata will be a success!"

Mala looked very pale, and her only response was a pressure of the hand, intended as a sisterly assurance that nothing would be wanting on her part, which Arnold, poor boy, interpreted in a very diffe-

rent way, and went off with a step so light, and face so beaming, to relieve Herr Bergmann, that Wallraf, who knew nothing of the proposed arrangement, muttered audibly, "The lad is crazed! he seems to thrive upon disappointment."

The Director willingly resigned the *taktstock* into the legitimate hands, as he had a sort of misty foreboding that he had better be at liberty to sprinkle his darling with water, lest the effort should prove too much for her. The audience having by this time given sundry unmistakeable indications of its opinion that even charitably-minded orchestras ought to be punctual, Arnold sounded the customary rat-tat on the desk, and the curtain drew up (in imagination), disclosing Goetz pacing the turf before the little forest hostelry.

We need not assure the reader that the cantata was a complete success, for of course *cela s'entend*; the hunting chorus might have been written by a musical Nimrod, so inspiriting and rollicking was it (though, if we remember aright, in the drama the hunters are by no means jovial over their feats!); while the aspirations of the devoted robber knight after freedom and unity (modernized by Wallraf) appealed directly to popular sentiment—to the longing for the one united Germany, which at that time was uppermost in people's thoughts, and has since been happily gratified. But there is no doubt that Mala and the part allotted to her were the chief

attractions. Probably there were few among the assembled thousands who did not feel a thrill of surprise when the representative of Maria stood before them—a slender girl, almost a child, in her simple white dress, a shrinking modesty betrayed by the quivering of the music-roll in her hand, and the half-trembling, half-trustful glance of the deep, innocent eyes. A hushed awe stole over the assembly as her clear young voice broke for the first time upon their ears; and in after days many thought with a sigh of the striking affinity between the *débutante* and the hapless heroine whose misfortunes she made her own for the time.

We must premise that Wallraf's Marie differs somewhat from Goethe's. When deserted by Weislingen, she does not apathetically accept the advances of Franz von Sickingen, but resigns herself, under despairing protest, to her fate, until the capture of her brother leads to the final interview with her betrayer. In fact, Marie is the heroine of the cantata—not Adelheid; and although a meeting takes place between the two (Marie accidentally encountering Adelheid on her return from the gipsies—the camp scene being picturesquely retained by Wallraf)—the haughty beauty holds the subordinate position, and quails beneath the just reproaches and agonized appeals of her supplanted rival. How Mala sang the part we cannot attempt to describe; her delineation of the forsaken girl, ultimately rising

above the recollection of past injuries, and forgiving the man who has wrecked her life-happiness, revealed the intensity of true dramatic passion, and was never forgotten by those who witnessed it.

When the last echoes of the closing song had died away, a profound silence reigned, succeeded by a storm of applause; and the Director, with a look of proud happiness which Mala had never seen him wear before, tenderly as he loved her, took his daughter in his arms and kissed her—an action which we may inform the English reader was regarded by no one present as either curious or done for effect; it being, in fact, the most natural proceeding under the circumstances.

Robert made his appearance on the platform in a tumult of delight, shaking hands with everybody who would submit to the operation, and prophesying loudly in his usual elegant way that “Arnold would cut out Meyerbeer yet; and as for Mala, if she once appeared at Covent Garden, whew! all the stout full-blown cabbages” (*roses*, it is to be presumed) “who called themselves *prime donne*, would never venture to show face again.”

But Wallraf's conduct was an enigma to every one, except the Director and Arnold; for when Mala held out her hand to him with a smile, saying, “Have I done well, Wallraf?” he turned his back abruptly on her with a “Don't look at me so, child!” and immediately afterwards quitted the hall.

"What have I done, papa?" said Mala in dismay.

"Take no notice of it," whispered the Director: "your singing has stirred up old memories—that is all."

The second *tableau* was as striking as the first; the temple of Jupiter Ammon—the sacrifice—the boy Hannibal in the act of vowing perpetual vengeance against Rome—the attendant long-robed priests—the groups of magistrates, soldiers, and citizens of Carthage, constituting a highly effective *ensemble*.

The concert was also thoroughly appreciated, and the whole evening pronounced a decided "success."

From that day there began to be observable in the Director's tenderness towards his daughter an indescribable curious admixture of chivalric gallantry (it was not exactly this either, but we use the term for lack of a better); he recognised in her the elements of the true artist, and Mala had no longer to complain of being treated as a plaything.

END OF VOL. I.



